History of Exeter

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A History of Exeter Ontario by Joseph L. Wooden

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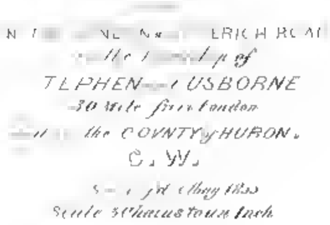
EXETER



[illegible] ERICH ROAD
in the Townships of
STEPHEN and USBORNE
30 Miles from London
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C. W.
S[illegible] 3rd of May 1853
Scale 3 Chains to an Inch

A History of Exeter, Ontario by Joseph L. Wooden

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To My Family

Diane Susan, Deborah,
Catherine and John
and to the
memory of those whose
strength built this
community

The printing of this book was financed by the Council of the Town of Exeter. The book was printed by The Exeter Times-Advocate whose publisher Mr. Robert Southcott extended his full cooperation in providing complete access to the files of the newspaper and in advising me on the general format of the book. The typing was done by my wife Diane whose assistance is gratefully appreciated.

J. L. Wooden

Author's Note

The history of Exeter has been prepared with the help of so many people that an enumeration of their names would certainly result in the omission of someone. Consequently I will not attempt to name anyone. I will simply say thank you to everyone who assisted me in obtaining information.

There are a great many quotations included in the book and again I have not shown the source of these quotes in most cases. Most of the quotations come from newspaper files, letters, private papers, historical sketches by individuals and similar sources. The quotes are indicated, but acknowledgement of each quote would have given the book a cluttered appearance.

It was my original intention to have included a much larger section on the schools and churches. I also originally hoped to include a chapter on Exeter's contribution to the Great Wars along with some comment on the earlier military history. A chapter on the place of the small town in Ontario's history was also planned but all of these things are made impossible by the limitation of space and the pressure of time.

I have no doubt made errors and omitted events that some people may feel should have been included. Such errors and omissions are solely my responsibility and not those of the people who assisted me.

I hope The History of Exeter will provide some insight into the life of small town Ontario and provide enjoyment to those who have some connection with Exeter.

The work on this History should have been started many years ago so that it could have been more complete and more accurate. However, publication was planned so that the book would be available during Exeter's Centennial Year, 1973.

Exeter, Ontario
January, 1973
J. L. Wooden

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chapter 1

The Beginnings of Exeter

To hunt, to fight, to wait for years to hew out a farm, to make a homestead, one must needs be a man.

A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

One hundred and forty years is not really a long time on the scale of human history. Seven score years — the lifetime of two men and yet that is the period of time that has passed since the first white man took his axe to the great forest of this region and began transforming it from a densely wooded area to an open agricultural land from which most of the trees have been removed. Down went the great oaks, some of which, such as John Galt's famous Beverly Oak, measured thirty three feet in girth and eighty feet in the height of its trunk, above the top of which rose the crown of vast branches; down came the giant black cherry trees as big as ten feet in girth and fifty feet high; down came buttonwoods so big that several men could crawl into a hollowed trunk and drink a quart of whiskey in honor of its size, as "Tiger" Dunlop and his cronies did once. Down they came — black walnut, basswood, maple, elm — as the settlers took their "dive into the woods." Some would wish that the settlers had left a few of the great trees standing and that we had some large acreages of climax woods left but it is only lately that we have begun to look with nostalgia upon the forest. "The Canadian settler hated a tree, he regarded it as his natural enemy as something to be destroyed, eradicated, annihilated by all and any means."

So great woods covered the land which was called the Huron Tract, a million acres of land in the heart of Upper Canada owned by the Canada Company, a land and settlement company which had been established in England in 1826. That part of the Huron Tract in which Exeter eventually developed was not greatly different from the rest of the Tract except perhaps that it was wetter and less amenable to settlement than other sections. The area was also off the Huron Road which brought in the settlers from the east and helped the areas north of Exeter fill in more quickly than the Exeter area. The first written reference to the Exeter area is found in the diaries of the Rev. William Proudfoot who passed through the area in 1833. He described the area as having "excellent soil" with the trees "being chiefly maple, elm, oak, ironwood, and black ash." On the whole, however, Proudfoot was happy to pass through the area which he considered to be a "dreary region." When he passed up the London Road, which at that time was barely a trail, there were only two dwellings in what is now Exeter. These were the shanties of James Willis and William McConnell. Proudfoot spent the night in McConnell's shanty which also served as a tavern or inn; thus was Exeter's first hotel and was erected in February, 1833. It stood somewhere near where the Presbyterian Church now stands. Proudfoot was a Presbyterian missionary so there is a nice anticipatory touch in the site of his lodging. Proudfoot described McConnell's tavern as "the most wretched place I have ever put a night in. The logs are not well built, the interstices are very carelessly filled in, and the wind finds its way between the logs and the door did not fit by at least three or four inches." It certainly was not as good as the inn operated by McConnell's father at Elginfield. Proudfoot did not like the food either; it was probably like most tavern food at the time and consisted of heavy Indian meal bread, fried pork or beef tallow and tea. Butter and coffee were luxuries; sugar and milk were virtually nonexistent.

Proudfoot was probably too hard on William McConnell who had only just built the shanty a short time, perhaps only a few weeks, before Proudfoot came. McConnell was a Canada Company contractor and he was not only required to maintain his shanty as an inn but also to maintain the twenty mile section of the London Road from Clandeboye to Clinton. McConnell eventually acquired some four hundred acres on both sides of the Ausable River and on both sides of the London Road, some of the land was deeded to McConnell by the Canada Company as part payment for his work on the road. He built the first saw mill in the area on the river in 1833 and in 1834 he built the first grist mill and dam, probably quite near where the dam is now. This mill ground only whole wheat flour for years. One of his children, born in 1833 is said to have been "the first white child born in the region". This statement may not be quite accurate since other sources suggest that a son of Thomas Lamb, who had settled a short distance north of McConnell, was the first white child born in the area. Lamb's son was probably the first to be born in the Huron Tract between London and Goderich. However, McConnell was for many years one of the outstanding promoters of the district, and to him goes the honor of being the first to operate a tavern and the first to operate a manufacturing activity in the area. McConnell was also a Huron District Councillor for the United Townships of Usborne, Stephen and Hay in 1842. He was not, however, the first settler in what is now Exeter.

The first white settlers to take up land in what is now Exeter were James Willis and his wife Jane. They "braved the terrors of loneliness and an unknown region". He took up Lot 20, London Road Survey, Usborne Township which was in the south-east part of what is now Exeter. Willis came up the London Road sometime during the winter of 1832 and built his first shanty somewhere in the area of what is now Main and Simcoe Streets. He left his wife in London while he built his cabin which was no doubt "rudely constructed of small round logs. The roof was covered with clap boards or basswood trough and the spaces between the logs were stuffed with moss or clay". These first shanties were makeshift structures erected to serve only for a few years until such time as the settler could build his hewed log farmhouse, or perhaps in the area we are talking about, frame or brick residences replaced the log shanty directly.

Willis was the only settler within a twenty-mile distance in any direction; the London Road had been opened only three years before he came and was merely a sleigh track at this time. It had not yet been logged or stumped north of Lucan. James and Jane Willis, then, were the first pioneers in the whole area and rank among the very first settlers in the whole Huron Tract. In Goderich, Dunlop's "Castle" and a few log cabins owned by Gooding, Louis Belmore, Frank Trench, Frank Keeshaw, Peter Andrews and Feltre Fisher were the only signs of settlement in 1832. Ben Miller's mill had been built, but few other signs of settlement were visible in this region. Unlike the later arrivals to the Exeter area, who came from Devon, Willis had emigrated from Armagh, Ireland, a short time before coming to the Huron Tract.

There are the usual stories about the Willis family, as there are

about other pioneers. For example, Mrs. Willis had a particular dread of wolves. This was in part, a result of their continued howling at night. At times when her husband was away, she found the noise almost unendurable. "There was one occasion when Jane was roasting venison over her hearth fire when a large grey wolf bounded through the door, seized the piece of meat and was gone." Wolves carried off small pigs and other animals from the Willis yard. Despite the hardships, which together with heavy work and child-bearing made many pioneer women into drudges or "lonely neurotics", Jane Willis reached the age of ninety and saw "the trackless forest transformed into the thriving village of Exeter, where she was known as "Granny Willis"; she died on May 30, 1893.

Another well known story concerns James Willis who walked in the spring of 1833 to London to buy a hoe. He had one shilling but found that a hoe cost three shillings. So he walked home and planted his potatoes with his axe on the small area which he had cleared. It is said that he obtained an excellent yield of potatoes from the soil between the stumps.

There is no record of why Willis chose the spot that eventually became Exeter. Perhaps he was aware that the site which he picked was half way between London and Goderich and perhaps he felt that eventually some development would occur. In any case he was the first, but he was soon followed by other pioneers who took up land along the London Road. Incidentally, the enlarged brick Willis residence still stands behind Graham Arthur's Garage. The brick part was added later by George Willis. William May settled a short distance south of Willis on June 21, 1832; this was just a few months after Willis came. Thomas Lamb settled a few miles north of Willis about the same time that May came. John Balkwill, a brother-in-law of May had apparently cleared four acres during the summer of 1831 and being "so pleased with the country" he returned to Devonshire to induce his brothers and friends to come. It was Balkwill that persuaded May to come. These two families came from Morton in Devonshire; a number of others also came from Morton as well as neighbouring parishes.

Balkwill and May took up land along the London Road and encouraged others to come. This marked the beginning of the "Devon Settlement" which was centred about two miles south of what is now Exeter around the Balkwill house which was known as the "Devonshire Inn". The Balkwill Inn or tavern served the area for many years. It passed from the Balkwills in 1855 when the tavern licence was transferred to Mr. McDonald.

The May homestead was the first billet for the itinerant clergy of the area and also the site of the first illicit whiskey still in the area. It is not reported whether the one had anything to do with the other. The whiskey still may in fact not have been illegal. It may be that Mr. May made more whiskey than he was legally allowed to make. The minutes for Usborne Township for February 1857 note that May was suspended from making whiskey for twelve months. It was implied that he exceeded the legal limit for home stills.

Some of the other Devon men to come in the 1830's included Louis Holman, George Snell, Richard Handford and Thomas Bissett. These men and their families joined May and Balkwill along the London Road in the first three miles south of what is now Exeter in the "Devon Settlement." Those Devonshire men were the first of a very large number who came to the Exeter, Usborne and Stephen Township areas during the period 1830-1870. The size of the families of these early settlers helped the area grow. For example, Handford had three daughters and eight sons and Holman had seven boys and five girls. Five families living on adjacent farms in the Devon settlement had fifty children among them.

There may be some argument as to who was the first Devonshire man to come to these parts. The honor goes to either John Balkwill or Richard Handford. James Handford in 1933 stated that his father Richard had "the honor of being the very first man to leave Devonshire for Canada." James also stated that Handford's letters home "brought out such an influx of settlers that for miles around his home the country was settled with Devon folk, a sturdy, honest, thrifty people, who made this part of the country blossom." So Richard Handford, "a quiet, energetic man," left Devon when he was twenty one, "although his parents pleaded with him with tears not to leave dear old Devon." He was accompanied by William Rattenbury and the two of them reached Toronto with only two shillings between them. They worked in Peel County for a time but later walked to Egmondville along the Huron Road. Handford went south and eventually took up three hundred acres, first occupying Lot 7, Concession 1, Stephen Township which was about three miles south of where Exeter would be on the London Road. Rattenbury went on to the 'Corners' and is supposed to have named the spot Clinton after Lt. Gen. Lord Clinton on whose estate he had been a tenant farmer. Rattenbury operated the Rattenbury Hotel there for fifty years. Handford built his shanty roofed with "basswood scoops" shortly after May and Balkwill had built their cabins. Richard married Dorothy Bissett, daughter of Thomas Bissett. The Bissetts had come from Merton, Devonshire in 1834. Dorothy was clearly a pioneer woman. When her family landed in Toronto she evidently had decided to remain there to work. After a year the fifteen year old girl decided to rejoin her family. She walked the one hundred

and fifty miles alone from Toronto to Egmondville and south to the family's home in the Devon settlement. This walk was through mostly untamed forest at the time. She married Handford three years later.

The Handfords we noted had eight sons and three daughters. One of these sons was James who lived to be Exeter's grand old man dying in 1936 at the age of ninety-eight. James recalled the pioneer days very well and told of the Indians who lived on the Handford farm including Chief Sarponace who with his men in 1860, did a war dance before the Prince of Wales when His Royal Highness visited London. The prince was delighted and amused. It was reported by W. H. Johnson that James and Richard Handford and Holman were also in the dance. Johnson also noted the following: "The next day great doings were planned for the Fair Grounds and the crowd was larger than the day before. These three young men were there to see with the rest. On account of taking part in the war dance the day before they wished to secure a place with the prince. As they pushed forward they were stopped by a member of the prince's bodyguard but nothing daunted they still moved closer. The soldier drew his sword and said he would cut off their heads if they dared to go farther. Dick Holman's fist collided with the guard's chin and the sword flew through the air. Then they realized what they had done. The two Dicks lost themselves in the crowd and James, who was younger, disappeared also."

The Handfords had excellent relations with the Indians, who would likely have been Chippawas or Neutrals. While Richard Handford and Louis Holman were away as militia men during the 1837 rebellion the Indians who lived on Handford's land came to the house and "cut the wood, fed the cows and did other chores." These Indians lived in the area for years earning a living by making baskets, axe handles and other items; they fished, hunted and trapped beaver as well. The Handford and Holman men learned much about the woods from the Indians. They learned Indian lore; the language, war dances and other Indian customs. James was an expert at logging bees, barn raisings and at cradling grain. He also won many ploughing matches as a boy winning his first competition in a field where the Exeter Opera House once stood; ploughing was done with a yoke of oxen. At this time even London was just a small community and James Handford could recall visits there. One occasion he went with his uncle Jack Bissett who took on a number of soldiers in battle. He "licked everybody" so the soldiers treated him to a "big drunk" and put him to bed.

The Handford name has been found in the Exeter area for about one hundred and forty years. Tom Handford was the area's most well known horse dealer. Many of the Handfords have

left the area. Silas Handford lived with his family on Main Street in one of Exeter's oldest frame buildings on Main Street South; it was torn down in 1940. Silas' sons moved away, Augustus to Renfrew, another to Wisconsin and two to Sarnia. A Miss Handford who lived on Gidley Street was the last Handford to reside in Exeter.

Other early arrivals along the London Road included the Case family from Wicklow, Ireland. Thomas Case had ten sons and this family came in 1836. William Elder came in 1836. The Daymans came to the area quite early and may have been the third family to take up a location in what is now Exeter, joining McConnell and Willis. George McLeod, a "wood ranger" for the Canada Company came to the area from Scotland in 1843. These people, mainly from Devon, who came in the 1830's were the first pioneers of this immediate area. They were the forerunners of the later Devonshire people who came in the late 1840's and early 1850's. The years 1849-1858 were the peak years of Devon migration to North America. In those years 15,000 people sailed from the port of Plymouth. There was little additional settlement in what is now Exeter until the late 1840's, mainly, it seems because the land was low and wet. Aside from those of McConnell, Willis and Dayman, there were few other dwellings in what is now Exeter until the late 1840's. There must have been some others in the immediate area, however, since a school was erected in Francistown on the Usborne side in 1838. More will be said later about the school.

The clearing of the land proceeded although it was slow work. "you may swing the axe here from morning to night for a week before you let the daylight in upon you," it was said. Indeed, with "perfect strength, good fortune and good weather," it took three weeks to clear one acre but even then the stumps remained. These early Devon folk were joined by others from the same parishes as time went on. The Herns, Thomas and Elizabeth (Manning) came from Devon in 1852; their voyage took nine weeks and claimed the lives of two of their children; they eventually settled near Winchelsea. William Sweet and his wife Mary (Jones) settled south of Exeter in the late 1830's. William Horn from Sutcombe, Devonshire emigrated in 1843 and came to Usborne in 1853. Thomas Shute from Merton, Devon took up Lot 14, Concession 5 in 1852; he, like many other pioneers had a large family — in his case twelve. The Eacretts came to what is now Exeter in 1853. Charles Eacrett operated a harness and shoe making shop and built the Gould and Jory block. Bagshaw, Poplestone, Heywood (also from Merton Parish), Jones from Langtree, Devon, Tom Collins and William Sanders were other early arrivals to the immediate area.

Also coming from Devon, Morchard Bishop Parish, to be ex act were the Southcotts and the Drews. William Drew came with his family in 1849 to London where his father, mother and two sisters died of cholera. He and four younger brothers and sisters walked to Exeter in 1854. Drew became one of the more active businessmen of the area, building many of the early frame houses. He also built the Commercial Hotel about 1860 and operated it for twelve years, then selling it to John Hawkshaw. He had a furniture business which he eventually sold to R. N. Rowe. It is said that Drew suggested the name 'Exeter Times' to White in 1873 when he came to found the paper. Charles Southcott came to Exeter in 1856 and opened a tailor shop. More will be said about Drew and Southcott later.

From Lynton, Devonshire in 1849 came Richard Delbridge; he had been born on June 13, 1803. He was a shepherd in Exmoor Forest, Devon when he married in 1835. In 1849 he settled in Lobo Township and in 1853 he moved to Usborne, "a veritable wilderness"; it is said that he had to "underbrush a road through the woods to allow his oxen to pass from Elimville to the lot which he had selected for his house". Richard is reported to have been "a quiet, industrious man, a kind husband, and an indulgent father, highly respected by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance". When he died on February 18, 1885, "his remains were followed to the grave by ninety vehicles filled with mourning relatives and sympathizing friends". One of his sons, John, became a well known Usborne farmer who frequently challenged his neighbours with feats of agricultural productivity. For example, he produced a two thousand pound beef cow once and published a challenge "who can beat it?" He once brought to town a sixty-five pound pumpkin and again said "who can beat it?" This John was the grandfather of the present Mayor of Exeter, Mr. John H. W. Delbridge.

We will mention one or two other early arrivals. Thomas Gidley came from London, England and settled on Lot 21, Concession 1, Stephen Township. He and his father Bartholomew cleared the bush and built a log cabin in what is now the centre of Exeter; this was in 1852. He later built a "large and stately house" on the end of Gidley Street. It is now occupied by Ted Jones. Thomas Gidley was a cabinet maker in London, England and he carried on his craft in Exeter. He started a chair and furniture factory in 1859; this factory was on the site of the Beaver Lumber Company buildings. Gidley also built the Oddfellows block on Main Street. In addition he farmed in Stephen Township and was Reeve there from 1860-1863. He had three sons: Richard, Charles and Samuel. He left his farm to the first named and the furniture factory to Charles and Samuel. Charles Gidley built the large house on William Street now occupied by Douglas Gould. The house was built on a triple lot in a grove of pine and honey locust trees. Charles died on January 7, 1917 at the age of seventy-eight. Samuel moved to Duluth in 1904. Samuel's son Harry carried on the woodworking business. However, Harry Gidley is remembered more for his contribution to the musical life of Exeter since he managed the Opera House for many years and was leader of the Exeter Brass Band for years. Richard Gidley's wife (Honor Bassett) was the first person to be buried in the Exeter Cemetery. That was in 1866. The Gidley name is a well known one in the Exeter area and more will be said about the family later.

A few other settlers who came from Devon may be mentioned. The Mannings came in 1852 and mention is made of Richard Manning later. The Cornish family also came from Devon in 1852, one of them, John Cornish, was a framer and a builder who "showed no fear at the top of frames of the highest barns." Cornish was an expert with the broad axe. He was, in addition, an expert with the jug; it was said that he needed lots of whiskey at a barn raising. The Crouch's, Chings, and Johns also came from Devonshire. John Johns came with his family from Langtree Parish, Devon in 1848 and settled on Lot 12, Concession 6, Usborne Township in 1850. He was the second settler in that Concession. It is reported that young Johns was the first pupil in the first Winchelsea School. There is also the report that Johns was a great axe man; one of his greatest pleasures in life was felling trees. Johns married Sarah Cudmore in 1873; the couple had six children, three girls and three boys (Richard, Sam and Charles). The Johns family have been well represented in Exeter over the years. David Johns was postmaster for many years; more is said about David Johns in a later chapter. Kenneth Johns served on the South Huron District High School Board for many years and was Chairman for much of the time. Walter Johns, became a classics scholar and eventually became President of the University of Alberta, a post he held for some years.

With these and many others coming from Devonshire during the period from the early 1830's to the 1870's it is not surprising that Devonshire place names like Exeter and Crediton appeared in the area. Nor is it surprising to find the following description of Exeter written in 1889 in the London Free Press:

> Exeter is perhaps the most English place in Canada. One hears the broad dialect of Devonshire and Cornwall from the labourers heaping up the corporation mud that has been gathering all winter and it greets you from the merchant behind his counter and the butcher at his stall. It stares at you from the business signs where such names as Sanslacombe, Bawden, Hambly, Brimacombe, Snell and Trevithick are doing their share to perpetuate the memory of old Exeter.

Barnstaple, Molton, North and South, Crediton, Portsmouth and Truro."

These early settlers' main line of communication was the London Road. One of the early stage drivers on the Road between London and Goderich was Jack Quick. He brought the news of the outside world and made small purchases for the settlers who would give him the money for the item to be purchased. Jack would as likely as not, spend the money on booze. He would, however, use the next settler's money to purchase the first one's item. He was always robbing one to pay for the other's goods and consequently was always behind. But no one seemed to mind. More is found on the stage lines in the chapter on transportation.

Before we end this brief chapter on the earliest beginnings of Exeter we must comment on two more families — perhaps the two most influential families in the early history of Exeter. These are the Carlings and the Pickards. In 1818 Thomas Carling landed in Quebec City. He was twenty-one and had come from his native Yorkshire soil to seek his future in Canada. He reached York (Toronto) and from there he walked to Port Talbot through the Upper Canadian wilds. The fact that he killed a wolf with a stick on the way testifies to how wild it was. He purchased land from Col. Talbot. Later on he married Margaret Routledge and the couple took up residence on a farm near St. Johns in London Township. The isolation of the area is demonstrated by the fact that the marriage banns were published for three weeks on trees by the crossroads. Tom and Margaret were the first to be married in the area and the ceremony was performed by the Magistrate, Col. Burwell. The Carlings had five boys unfortunately only three lived

The Carling Home

Isaac Carling and Family

The eldest son was William, the youngest was John and the middle son was Isaac, named after Tom's brother who had been a non-commissioned officer in the First Life Guards and who had fought at Waterloo. John and William took over the small brewing business which their father had started more as a hobby than anything else, but the two boys felt the business had possibilities. Isaac was apprenticed as a tanner at E. W. Hyman's tannery in London. In 1846 Isaac married Ann Balkwill of the 'Devonshire Settlement' and in 1847 at the age of twenty two he arrived in what was to become Exeter. Carling built a tannery near where the Tuckey Beverage plant is now located and he opened a general store where the Bell and Laughton building is located. Carling's arrival really marked the beginning of a village; it was not much but Carling "thought he saw a future for the spot." Carling became involved in local affairs almost immediately. In 1851 he was appointed an Inspector of Taverns along with George McLeod and Robert Walker. The three shared the stipend of one pound ten shillings. Carling was also a Councillor for the United Townships of Usborne and Stephen. In 1857 he was Reeve of Stephen. Isaac later became the Member of the Legislative Assembly in whose 1866 journal it is noted that "Isaac Carling petitioned the government" that certain lands in the Exeter area be withdrawn from the Canada Company and sold to settlers. Carling unseated Gibbons in the contested election of 1867 to become South Huron's first M.L.A. after Confederation. He was, of course, Exeter's first Reeve. Carling eventually built the large house on Huron Street (now the hospital). Isaac had three sons and six daughters; his sons were Thomas, William and Isaac Jr. Isaac Sr. died in 1893 at the age of seventy having "had a stroke of paralysis" some years before. "He bore his dreadful affliction with exemplary meekness and patience". This genial and hospitable gentleman passed "quietly away at his hitherto happy and beautiful home" in 1895. More is said about Mr. Carling in other sections of the history of Exeter; he played a major part in the growth of Exeter, having been "the founder and first Reeve", Member of the Legislative Assembly, a prime mover in bringing the railway to Exeter and a most important member of the business community. His importance to the community was witnessed by the presence of "over one hundred conveyances in his funeral cortege". As we said we will be discussing in later chapters more about Carling's work; this "earnest and sincere Christian and scrupulously honest and true gentleman" contributed perhaps more than anyone else to the emergence of a village; indeed, there is some indication that the name Carling's Corners was applied to the embryo settlement in the late 1840's and early 1850's.

Richard Pickard

Of equal importance to Carling's contribution to Exeter's growth was that of James Pickard. "Boss" Pickard as he came to be called arrived in the Exeter area "with little but his natural qualities to fit him for a fight with what was even then a comparative wilderness". The Pickards were from Ringsash Parish in Devon and the family played a great part in Exeter's growth. James opened a small store first just east of Exeter then a larger business in the village. We will discuss Pickard's business ventures later. James became known immediately to the local officials and was appointed fence viewer in 1852. In 1854 Pickard became an Usborne Township Councillor and remained on the Council until 1857. He was also Pathmaster in Ward two, Usborne Township. The Pathmaster "superintended" the work on the roads performed by Statute Labor within the beat for which the Pathmaster was responsible.

James' brother Richard came to Canada in 1849 with other

members of the family. James seems to have arrived in Canada in 1834 at the age of fourteen,he died in 1904 at the age of eighty-three. Richard worked with James until the early 1870's when he went into business with George Samwell. The Pickard-Samwell businesses flourished, but again we will discuss this later. In politics James was a Tory and Richard a Grit. James was on the first Council and it was James Pickard who is reputed to have given Exeter its name after the great city in Devonshire, England.

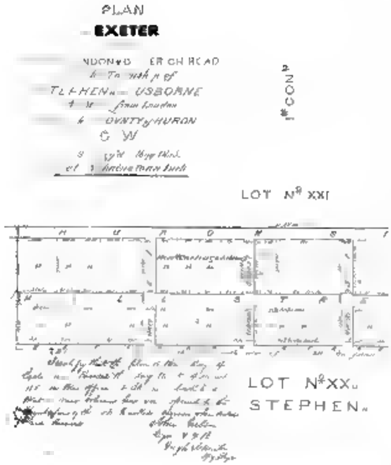
Dr. Hyndman B. Y. Elliott Isaac Carling

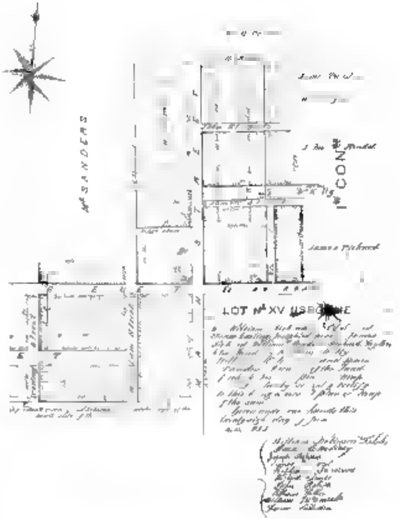
Three of Early Exeter's Leading Citizens

This chapter on the beginnings of Exeter shows that by the early 1850's there was an indication that a village was beginning. In May, 1855 a village plan was surveyed by William Robinson and registered in Goderich. On the plan is written, "I certify that this plan of the village of Exeter was recorded this day the third of August, 1855 in this office at eleven o'clock and that a new volume has been opened for the Registration of the lots marked thereon when deeded and received". The statement was signed by John Galt, Registrar of Huron and Bruce. This first survey had been urged by Isaac Carling and James Pickard and the other owners of land involved in the survey. These other owners were Joseph Acheson, William Sanders, Richard Taylor, John Randel, William Kelly, William McConnell, and James Vanstone.

This plan of the Village of Exeter was limited to the area shown on page 14 and 15.

It is not difficult to surmise the reasons for the street names. Main is obvious, James for James Pickard and Elizabeth for his wife, North is obvious, Ann Street for Isaac Carling's wife, Carling for the family, William for William Sanders, Market because the plans called for a market square in that area. Acheson for Joseph


PLAN
EXETER
NDON & D ER CH ROAD
TLEHEN USBORNE
from London
OVNTY of HURON
C W
CON
LOT No XXI
LOT No XX
STEPHEN


Mr SANDERS
1st CONn
James Pickard
LOT Nº XV USBO[illegible]E

Acheson Mill because of James Pickard's saw mill in that section of the village. Mary is perhaps for Acheson's wife and John may have been for John Randal; the name Union Street is not readily explained. It may be noted that the County of Huron Gazeteer for 1863 suggested that the Canada Company had laid out a village plan in 1833 but no information exists to substantiate this statement.

The second village plan followed in September 1855 when Thomas Gidley subdivided his land which lay between Main and Marlborough Streets and between Sanders and Victoria Streets. Richard Taylor added the third section to the village by surveying the area along the north side of John Street east to Bodman. In 1856 Exeter was extended to Hill Street.

Additional plans were developed in 1864 when Andrew McConnell had his land from the river north to the Thames Road surveyed. This plan had three buildings marked on it, one was Pickard's grist mill. The other two are open to question but the best guess is that one was W. H. Verity's house near where the Motel is now and the other on the corner must have been the Francistown hotel. There were other buildings, however, at this time. McConnell's own buildings, the store operated by John McDonnell, and Verity's foundry are some that were there.

Other plans followed: in 1875 John Southcott, in 1878 James Pickard, in 1881 and 1894 William Bawden, in 1895 Joseph Davis had plans of subdivision developed.

So in 1855 then, Exeter was first laid out in village lots and streets. In 1856 one of the above-mentioned plans showed thirty-one buildings. It is extremely difficult to identify all of these but it is possible to identify some. Among the buildings shown on this 1856 plan were Pickard's saw mill on Huron Street between Market and Acheson Streets, Pickard's store, and three others on Main Street between Huron and James Streets. William Drew's property on the corner of Huron and Mary Streets had three buildings shown. There was a house on the corner of Huron and Andrew Streets, and there were fifteen buildings on the west side of Main between Huron and North Streets (Sanders Street). Of these thirty one buildings, perhaps half were houses. This figure may be confirmed by a comment of Richard Pickard's wife who was an Elston and whose family came in 1856 to Exeter. Mrs. Pickard remarked that there were only fourteen houses in Exeter in 1856. This could not include the few houses in Francistown. One could assume then that there were about one hundred people.

Growth in 1856 continued. There were fifty five sales of land in 1856 in the surveyed part of the village of Exeter. There had been only seven transactions in the period from August to December 1855.

The first notation of Exeter in the minutes of Usborne Township occurred on February 2, 1857 when the Council instructed the clerk to prepare a map showing the Village of Exeter. During the late 1850's and 1860's considerable growth occurred. Lovell's Directory claimed that Exeter and Francistown had six hundred people by 1858. But this figure seems to be considerably inflated. It is highly unlikely that there would be more than three hundred. By 1873 the growth was such that men like James Pickard and Isaac Carling led the movement to have Exeter incorporated as a village. In subsequent sections of this history of Exeter we will look at the various aspects of Exeter's growth.

chapter 2

"Main Street"

Exeter a Business Community

"Enterprising Exeter, the hustlers for trade"

(The Exeter Times)

"Busy — well, I should think so! Ask any of its inhabitants if Mariposa isn't a busy, hustling, thriving town."

(Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town)

"The town, I say, has one broad street commonly called Main Street. On Main Street are a number of buildings of extraordinary importance — Smith's Hotel and the Continental and the Mariposa House, and two banks, to say nothing of McCarthy's block (erected 1878) and Glover's Hardware Store with the Oddfellows' Hall above it." [illegible] Leacock goes on describing Mariposa and in so doing he could just as easily be describing a dozen Ontario towns of the last part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century.

Change Mariposa's business names and Exeter becomes the town in the description. "But once in the Main Street," writes a London Free Press writer in 1899, "you see signs of evident prosperity, comfort and enterprise. Here and there are piles of brick and lumber, marking the places where new buildings will soon be in the course of erection. Although fully two thousand in population, Exeter is satisfied to call itself a village, and go on in its steady way while places of half its population and about a quarter of its wealth call themselves towns and flourish in semi urban grandeur with a mayor and full array of councillors. ... The main attraction of Exeter is certainly its Episcopal Church ...." While the writer did not go on to comment on the Main street he would have noted at that time the large and imposing three storey place of business of James Pickard, the Samwell and Pickard block, Acheson's Central Hotel, Brimacombe's Mansion House. Perhaps the writer quenched his thirst in the barroom of the Commercial Hotel and examined the merchandise in C. and S. Gidley's furniture store (with the Oddfellows Hall above it). He may have purchased a bottle of spirits in one of several stores dispensing liquor or changed a bill in Molson's Bank. He could have stopped in any of these places of business and others because in 1889 Exeter was experiencing its most prosperous decade. In forty years or so the village had emerged from a tiny collection of buildings concentrated in the area between Huron Street and John Street to take on the appearance which has been retained basically ever since.

While the business and industrial history of the community began with the establishment of McConnell's two mills in the early 1830's, it was not until the late 1840s that there were any real signs that a village might develop. In 1847 Isaac Carling came up the London Road and opened a general store and tannery as we noted in the previous chapter. The next year saw Joseph Acheson, the first of that family to come to Exeter, open a shoemaking shop. When Acheson began selling his boots and shoes there were only three or four log houses, Carling's businesses, and McConnell's establishments within the limits of what was to become Exeter. Acheson's store, which was on Main Street, possibly between Anne and John Streets, burned in 1865. James Pickard arrived in 1851 or 1852 and opened the third store in Exeter; his large building was erected by 1855 or 1856. Shortly after Pickard's arrival a number of others came including Thomas Gidley, Thomas Bissett, who opened a livery barn, and John McDonnell, who came from Cornwall and opened a store for Gunn and Gordon in Francistown, and William Sanders. The latter two named, Sanders and McDonnell, became postmasters in 1855. Sanders was appointed in the post village of Exeter and McDonnell was named postmaster of the post village of Francistown. There is some question as to whether or not Francistown was in fact a post village. The Hay post office which is in Exeter north now was not in Francistown in the early years. It was two miles north. In 1863 James Murray was postmaster there. McDonnell was named the area's first Issuer of Marriage Licenses in 1857 a post he held until 1886; in addition he was appointed Justice of the Peace succeeding "Squire" Thomas Gidley.

By 1855 there was in existence the nucleus of a village centred on the London Road-Huron Street crossroads. There were about thirty buildings, mostly on Main Street between Huron Street and North Street (later renamed Sanders Street). There were nine land owners in the area and these nine, including Carling, Acheson, Pickard, Sanders, William McConnell and four others had a village plan surveyed and registered on the third of August 1855. This date could be taken as the date on which Exeter began as a village. The name was probably chosen by James Pickard. About the same time Francistown was showing signs of emerging as a village with John McDonnell's store which he had purchased from Gunn and Gordon and a few other buildings. There is reason to believe that the hotel later known as Walper's hotel also existed by the mid 1850's.

Thus, by the mid 1850's the nuclei of two villages were emerging: Francistown being the area around the London and Lake Roads intersection and extending south towards the river where the mills owned by McConnell were located and Exeter which as was noted above was forming around the Huron Street and London Road crossroads. The latter settlement was briefly known as Carling's Corners but was officially designated Exeter because of the increasing number of Devonshire people settling in the area. James Pickard himself coming from Devonshire apparently urged that the name be adopted. So the name of the great Devon city was carried to another part of the world by Devon men who had long before carried the name to New England as well. The origin of the name Francistown is unknown.

By 1860 Exeter had six stores. These were William Trick tinsmith, John Southcott, groceries, H.G. Broderick (General merchant) Carlings, Achesons and Pickards. There were four factories, three schools, three churches, Balkwill's Tavern, and a Masonic Lodge of which Isaac Carling was Worshipful Master. The Masonic Lebanon Forest Lodge No. 133 met on the "first Monday on or before full moon at William Balkwill's Hotel". There was also an Orange Lodge. By the same time Francistown had two stores, a foundry (Verity's) and a fine hotel. Both settlements had been designated post villages as was mentioned in 1855. Also by 1855 a doctor had taken up residence in Exeter. Dr. John Hyndman arrived in the "Devonshire Settlement" south of Exeter in 1851, the year in which he graduated from the Toronto Medical College. Hyndman's father Henry had been one of the leading men in the early settlement of Huron County having settled

A very early scene on Exeter's Main Street.
Dr. John Hyndman is shown in this picture.

in Colborne Township near Goderich. The Hyndmans, Lizars and Dunlops were among the most important figures in the area; Hyndman was appointed the first Sheriff of the County. The family experienced a number of tragic events including the loss of a child and the destruction by fire of the family home. Henry Hyndman took his family back to Scotland but two of his sons returned to Huron County, one to Goderich and John to Exeter. A third son was killed in the "bloody trenches of Sebastopol" during the Crimean war. Dr. John Hyndman then settled in Exeter in 1855 shortly after his marriage to Charlotte Quick, the daughter of one of the early settlers south of Exeter in "Devon". Dr. Hyndman practiced in Exeter until 1859 when he died. "His genial presence, courtly manner and kindly smile will be missed by all of us," noted the Times. Hyndman had five sons John, George, William, Garnet and Hugh and one daughter Edith. The last two named boys became dentists with Hugh carrying on the practice in Exeter.

During the 1860's Exeter continued to develop. Among the businesses then in existence were the oldest six stores mentioned previously, that is the stores of Carling, Acheson, Pickard, Broderick, Trick and Southcott. In addition to these stores a number of other places of business had been established. Some of these were: Joseph Azars (grocer), John Backer (blacksmith), John and James Balkwill (tavern), William G. Bissett (tin and coppersmith), Charles Boulton (drugs and P.L.S.), Robert Brabson and W. H. Verity (foundry), William Box (cabinet maker), John Brown (tailor), Mark Clark (boots and shoes), J. Clarke (general merchant), Richard Davis (blacksmith, carriage and wagon maker), Eldred Drew (cabinet maker, doors, sashes, blinds), William Drew (Commercial Hotel), C. and G. Escrett (saddlers), William Fanson (harnessmaker), Robert Elston (grocer), Alex Dyer (woodwork), A. Freeman (general merchant), Gidley Brothers (cabinet makers and undertakers), James Gordon (tavern), William Grigg (tailor, book seller and bible depository), David Johns (tinsmith), Thomas Fitton (clock and watch maker), J. and C. Southcott (merchants), Henry Lambrook (cabinet maker), Claudius Hamilton (druggist), John McConnell (tavern), James McNabb (cabinetmaker), James Sherbrooke (carpenter), Isaac Smale (saddler), Sinclair Tait (cooper), John Treble (boots and shoes), John Trick (blacksmith), J. Vanstone (watchmaker), Dr. H. B. Winan (drugs).

Another early scene on Exeter's Main Street showing David Johns' Tin Shop probably at the corner of James and Main Streets. No information is available to explain the gathering.

By the early 1870's the following list was compiled giving Exeter two post offices, seven general stores, three hardwares, six groceries, two drug stores, two book stores, two jewelry stores, two shoe stores, three tin and stove smiths, four furniture stores, six harness shops, four tailors, one liquor store, several barbers, butchers, bakers, a confectionery, a music store, two photographers, two lawyers, six doctors, three banks, and two telegraph offices.

A century ago these places of business were generally located along Main Street which was beginning to bear some resemblance to the street as it is at present. A number of the brick buildings which are the landmarks along the business street had been erected: James Pickard's large store, Eacrett's block (now Gould and Jory), Samwell and Pickard's block (opened 1873), the Commercial Hotel, Gidley's building, Drew's store, Fanson's block, Dr. Browning's store, William Sanders' two stores, were among the brick stores already erected by 1873 and still standing. There were in addition to these, a good number of frame buildings housing other places of business. Over the next thirty years, most of these were removed or replaced by brick buildings, for example, the I.O.O.F. block was erected in the 1870's; David Johns erected the Lindenfield stores in 1878; the Public Utilities building was erected in the early years of the century, replacing three frame stores; this process continued until the present form of the street was achieved. With one or two major exceptions, such as the removal of the Central Hotel, the buildings have not changed to any marked degree since the early years of this century.

One hundred years ago, however, there were no sidewalks, not even boardwalks which were not constructed until 1876. The street was mud in the spring, dust in the summer and frozen ruts and ice in the winter. Many of the stores had overhanging porches which kept the area in front of the store dry. Hitching posts and rails lined both sides of the business section in front of the stores. In the mid-1870's boardwalks and boardwalk crossings were constructed in the business section. The walk was covered by the overhanging porches in front of the stores. Efforts at gravelling the road were made and the street was watered by a watering wagon. The merchants were charged a frontage levy for the watering of the Main Street. The mud was shovelled away in the spring but the street remained muddy or dusty or rutted, depending on the season until the pavement was laid. A few gas lights were placed on the street in the 1880's and in the 1890's a few electric lamps were located along Main Street. So aside from the buildings, the street's appearance has otherwise changed — the mud, boardwalks, lamps, covered porch areas, hitching posts, the dust and the board crossings have all disappeared. Even the names on the stores have changed. It is difficult to think of more than two names which were on store fronts a century ago and are still on stores; these names are Browning and Sanders. Some of the old Main Street business names can still be found along the street, for example, Southcott and Broderick. Many of the names such as Trick, Currelly, Treble, Fanson, Carling, Pickard, Samwell, Fitton, Gidley, Brimacombe, Drew, Hawkshaw, Gidley, Acheson, have disappeared from the business section entirely. Indeed most of these names are not found in the town at all, although there are still Achesons and Pickards in the town.

The growth of Exeter's business community from the period 1847 to 1873 was accompanied by a corresponding growth in the

community generally. As the growth occurred in both Exeter and Francistown, the two villages tended to grow together and were, of course, amalgamated in 1873 to form an incorporated municipality called Exeter.

The municipal history will be considered elsewhere in this book. In this chapter we want to concern ourselves with the industries, businesses and general commercial activity. The industries will be considered first. Industry in the village was concentrated in several areas, there was an important group of industries along the river, some in Francistown, others in the southwest part of Exeter including "Cottletown", others were located along Main Street and near the railway.

Little remains of many of these industries. For example, the only reminder of industry in the southwest part of town is the name Mill Street and all that indicates the river industrial area is the name Old Mill Road. Each of the important industries is briefly described in the following pages.

The River Industries

1 McConnell's Grist Mill and Sawmill erected in the 1830's have already been discussed. It should be mentioned, however, that in the late 1850's the mill, still called McConnell's Mills, was operated by George Hunt and R. Webb.

2 McLachlan and McCallum — Tannery

This was started in 1876 on the south side of the river approximately where Mrs. J. Elliott's house is now located. Mr. McCallum was sole owner by the early 1880's. By 1899 the Tannery had been enlarged and consisted of a large frame building one hundred feet long with a brick warehouse, office and engine room. McCallum employed eight skilled workmen at that time including a Mr. Isaiah Hall. He shipped his products all over Ontario to Manitoba, the Northwest and British Columbia. In 1912 he gave up the tannery business and in 1920 the tannery was torn down by Tom Elliott who had purchased the property. This industry had provided local farmers with a market for hides. In addition to local hides the tannery used local hemlock bark as a source of tanning.

3 McLennan's Steam and Water Power Flouring and Grist Mill

This mill was located just east of where the railroad crosses the river today. A road ran along the south bank of the river past the tannery to McLennan's Mill. In the 1870's G. Willis was the chief grain buyer for the mill. Dry grain in 1875 was gristed for seven cents per bushel.

Water power for the mill came from a small dam which had

been built by the operators of the mill Nothing remains today of either the mill or the dam

A son of McLennan went on to become Professor Sir John McLennan of the University of Toronto Indeed a number of Exeter boys became involved with the University of Toronto This is illustrated by a quote from Charles Currelly's book I Brought the Ages Home. Currelly himself an Exeter boy says

> About the year 1926, as I was putting on my gown to go on the platform at Convocation Hall T A Russell came over to me and said, "It's not a bad showing for Exeter is it?" I looked around and saw Professor Ramsay the Greek scholar and the oldest Exeter boy present; Sir John Willison writer and Canadian correspondent of the London Times, Brigadier-General Mitchell, Head of the Faculty of Applied Science; Professor Sir John McLennan Russell himself of the Board of Governors, Martin, the Prime Minister of Saskatchewan his brother myself and two junior members of the staff"

4 The Exeter Steam Bending Factory

This mill was operated by James McNabb and was possibly located in McConnell's old mill since McNabb was there in the early 1860's after McConnell had sold out Hay rakes, pea harvesters and spinning wheels were produced The mill had a staff of four men "Turning done to order" said the advertisements This mill continued to operate until about 1880

5 Kilpatrick's Woollen Mill

West of the bridge was a woollen mill operated by George and Ralph Kilpatrick Opened in 1863 it burned down in 1875 During its operation it employed ten men in the art of carding spinning, weaving and cloth dressing

6 The Exeter Woollen Mill

Erected in 1876, this mill was located on the south bank of the river east of the bridge near Pickard's Grist Mill Operated by Messrs Wanless and Blain the mill produced tweeds, blankets and full cloth In 1880 the village granted the mill a subsidy of $4500 Van Egmond from Seaforth bought it in January 1884 and sold it to B Muir in October of the same year Muir shipped wool, blankets and yarns all over Ontario and the West He traded his manufactured goods to wholesale houses in the east receiving in exchange ladies and gents underwear stockings, and all kinds of manufactured wearing apparel The mill using local wool thrived until 1906 when the Muir brothers closed down the operation It was opened again as the result of the urging of the village council but its revival was short lived

7. Pickard's Grist Mill, Exeter Mills.

James Pickard either built this mill in the late 1850's or early 1860's near where the present Public Utilities pump house is located, or he purchased the old McConnell mill and improved it. A dam made of wood could have been built by Pickard but it may have been erected earlier by McConnell. "Cap" Howard bought the mill from Pickard and ran it as a saw mill and power plant in the 1890's. After the turn of the century, the mill became a derelict building.

The Old Grist Mill

Cottletown and the Huron Street Industries.

1 James Pickard's Steam Saw Mill

This industry, the first steam saw mill in the area, was erected on Huron Street, west of Victoria Park in 1855 by "Boss" Pickard. The importance of the mill to the economy of the area is illustrated by the production figures of 1869. In that year one and one-half million feet of lumber was produced from local timber supplies.

The mill was purchased in 1865 by John Gould to make staves for his cooperage. Gould's cooperage was located on William Street on the site of the present Legion building. In addition to the barrel-making factory Gould also operated an ashery for the production of lye and potash. John later sold the mill to James Gould. John was in business in the early 1860's.

2 The Sutherland and Innis Stave Company

The company purchased the old mill from James Gould in

1899, tore it down and erected two buildings, the sawmill on the south side and the barrel factory on the opposite side. The company opened another plant in Bryanstown at about the same time. In the winter of 1900, the company cut three hundred thousand feet of elm in the Hay Swamp. In 1903 Tom Creech was nearly killed when a saw broke, flying through the air close to Creech and crashing through the wall of the building. By 1904 the elm stock had been so depleted that the company ceased to operate in Exeter and moved their equipment to the Ottawa Valley. The mill was leased for a time by J. H. Gilles from Michigan. Gilles later operated another saw mill in an area north of the canning factory. The building was eventually torn down and today there is no indication of its existence except for the name Mill Street.

3 Spackman's Cooperage.

Typical Upper Canadian small town industries in the 1850's and 1860's included barrel making, soap and lye manufacturing. John Spackman was operating a cooperage and soap-making establishment in the 1850's in Exeter. His cooperage was on Huron Street East between Albert and Edward Streets on the creek which is now enclosed in a large tile in that part of the town. Like most industries it utilized local raw materials: the barrels were made from local elm and the soap was made from wood ash diligently gathered from the homes of the village by Davie Gilles. Spackman's little factory was torn down well before the turn of the century. Hugh Spackman, John's son, later operated the hardware store at the corner of John and Main Streets. The Spackman sign is still visible on the brick of what is now the F. A. May and Son store.

4 Cottletown

In the vicinity of the old William Pearce house on Anne

The Sunderland and Innis Sawmill

Street was the manufacturing establishment of George Cottle. Cottle produced wooden harvest tools such as rakes, snathes, grain cradles and fork handles. Ambrose Cottle eventually took over the business and took up residence in the old Pearce house. The factory was located immediately east of the house. Ambrose enlarged the operation by opening the Exeter cider mill shortly before the turn of the century; he made cider, apple butter and jelly. Mr. Cottle acquired one of the first gasoline engines to be used in Exeter to provide power for the turning factory and the cider mill. Ambrose was also one of the first to own an automobile in the village. It was red and had no top.

Cottle sold the two operations to J. A. and William Killough in 1903. The property was later acquired by S. J. V. Cane and he moved the equipment to the old Verity Foundry at the corner of Main and Wellington Streets, about 1920.

The Francistown Industries.

1. G. Bolton's pump factory was on the London Road north of the crossroads in the early 1870's. Other than the fact of its existence, little else is known about this small industry.
2. An apple evaporator operated on the Lake Road for a number of years. It was opened in 1899 by C. Witmer and was later owned by S. M. Sanders, J. Bruntnell and A. D. Clapp. The last owner was R. Laing "The Apple King."
3. The Verity Plough Works

Beginning as a small foundry, this industry grew to become Exeter's most important manufacturing concern. No industry before Verity and only one or two since have employed as many men as Verity employed during the peak years in Exeter. Verity employed between seventy and eighty full-time men in the 1890's.

In 1857 William H. Verity, a Yorkshireman, and a Mr. Brabson started the "Francistown Foundry". Verity was a young mechanical engineer in 1857 and was appointed as an inspection engineer on one of the steam driven ships making a maiden voyage crossing from London to New York in 1857. "On the ship there was a young lady named Mary Jane Fountain. Verity courted her during the crossing and promptly married her in New York when the ship arrived. The couple went to Buffalo and a few months later they moved to Upper Canada settling in Francistown where the Fountains had settled. There Verity entered into partnership with Brabson." For the manufacture of plows, sugar kettles, horse powers, straw cutters, saw outfits, box and cook stoves.

During his beginning years, Verity made all his patterns and machinery himself with "rudimentary equipment" including a drill lathe, boring mill, vise, and "a horsepower with a gear fifteen feet in diameter". The power for this "huge contraption was furnished by farmers' teams which used to come in twice a week when heats were taken off". Verity eventually bought Brabson out and the firm came to be known as W. H. Verity and Sons Foundry.

Verity's four sons, Robert H., William J., Percy E. and Charles F. all eventually entered the business. "Robert and William operated the big hand press which formed the mold boards of the plows . . . . . The furnace and press were outside in the open beside a creek in which a twenty-foot hole had been dug". The hot mold boards were cooled in this little pond. In 1869, the firm employed twelve men in the manufacture of Balls Ohio Self Rakers, Wood's Reaping Machine, plows, other agriculture implements and stoves. Verity stopped making stoves in the 1870's; he sold his stove business to John McCleary of London. Twenty years later the firm employed over forty "mechanics". For over thirty years "Canada's Great Plow Maker" operated his business in Francistown. The site of this Francistown foundry was at the corner of Alexander and William Streets.

In 1889 the Messrs Verity moved their expanding business from Exeter North or Francistown to the corner of Main and Wellington Streets, site of the present Liquor store. The new works extended from Main Street eastwards to Andrew Street. The village council generously granted the firm exemption from taxation in 1889 and the Times approvingly commented on the council's decision, saying that "the employees receive good wages, the greater part of which is left with our merchants every Saturday. A few more manufacturing institutions will place Exeter in the position of which she is so deserving."

After establishing the firm in this new location the Messrs Verity increased their staff to sixty as orders for plows from Manitoba came in. In 1889, the Foundry shipped nearly one thousand plows to the West. In those days the foreman of the forge was Robert Webster who oversaw the production of the famous Verity plow. The next few years saw the business steadily expand to the point where it was the most important industry in the entire area.

In 1892, however, the village was disturbed by news that the largest industry in the community was about to close and move to Brantford. The Massey-Harris firm had made offers to Verity. That company wanted Verity to manufacture all of their plows and had given "The Messrs. Verity flattering inducements to locate in either Toronto or Woodstock.

Amalgamation in the spring of 1891 had resulted in the formation of the Massey-Harris Company Limited. A further amalgamation occurred in December when Massey-Harris merged with the Patterson Wisner firm. "Hart Massey was the dominating figure" in the new corporation.

The mergers continued however, and in 1892 the Massey-Harris Company acquired forty percent interest in the Verity Plow Company. Mr. Verity proposed that his firm remain in Exeter. Exeter businessmen raised ten thousand dollars to assist in the expansion of the firm, council offered tax exemptions and promised to approach the railroad with a demand that a spur line be built to the works. These offers were taken to Massey-Harris by the Veritys who had promised "to take a strong stand in favor of Exeter". Unfortunately for Exeter, the Verity Works could not be retained and in October of 1892 the last fifteen carloads of machinery had left the Exeter station for Brantford, the new location of the Verity Ploughworks. In Brantford the firm took over the plant formerly occupied by the Wisner Company. The Works were gone and with them many Exeter families. It would seem that the major factor in the decision to move was the lack of satisfactory railway service and the need for centralization. With the loss of the Works Exeter's growth was seriously restricted. Indeed the village never recovered from the loss of this industry until the Second World War. In addition to the Veritys some of the other families who moved to Brantford were the Rentons, Emmetts, Braunds, McKays, McLaughlins and many others. In all over thirty families left Exeter, including over one hundred and fifty people.

W. H. Verity had lived in Exeter for forty years. The Verity home was located north of the river about where the motel is now located; it was one of the town's finest houses and "stood on an eminence like some fairy castle in splendid isolation". The Verity home was one of the first in Exeter to have a furnace installed to heat the whole house; this was in 1884. The Veritys were Methodists and Conservatives. The family played a major role in the activities of the village. With the move to Brantford W. H. Verity became Vice-President of the Verity Plough Company of Brantford. Verity died however in late 1892 a short time after the move. H. A. Massey became President. Mr. Verity was the father of twelve children including Mrs. T. R. Carling and Mrs. R. E. Pickard. His son W. J. Verity became the general manager and Vice-President of the Verity Plough Works and later a Director of the Massey Harris Company and

Vice-President of the Dominion Foundry and Steel Company. R. H. Verity, another son, eventually became General Superintendent of the Massey Harris Company in Toronto. Charles Verity was foreman of the molding room and Percy was Chief Pattern Maker. The Verity Company retained a separate identity for over twenty years. Eventually, however, the Massey Harris and Verity Companies were fully amalgamated in the Massey Harris Company. The Verity family continued to play an important part in the management of this firm. In 1897 "while the plant was working twenty-four hours a day on a rush order for Australia, an explosion occurred in the paint shop resulting in a fire which wiped out the entire works." A new plant was built in Brantford in 1897 and this factory gave Verity the "best equipped plow works in North America".

In 1893 the Verity buildings in Exeter were purchased by the Murray brothers of Wingham who operated a foundry in the buildings. The Exeter Electric Light and Power Company acquired that section of the Verity building on Main Street and developed a power plant there which provided electricity for the village until 1915 when Ontario Hydro came in. (See the chapter on municipal services for more information on the power company.) In 1913 the Exeter Manufacturing Company was established with a loan of ten thousand dollars from the village of Exeter. This company, founded by W. J. Murray, a Mr. Zeig and a Mr. Hanna, intended to utilize the old foundry building to produce plow points, road drags, cement machinery and other road machinery, did not have any degree of success and ceased operation in 1914 or 1915.

S. J. V. Cann acquired that part of the Verity foundry that had been used as the power plant and established a cider mill in the old building. Cann also operated one of the first gas stations out of this building. The building gradually became derelict and was eventually torn down by the Ontario Government to make room for the liquor store. With the disappearance of this building and its tall chimney, one of Exeter's landmarks was gone. The other Verity buildings, to the east, were torn down by the canning factory and the materials utilized at the factory. King Davis eventually acquired the land and erected houses on the site. Today nothing remains as evidence of the old Verity Ploughworks.

4. Fenwick's Flour and Grist Mill

After attempting to work a "poor sand farm lying along the banks of the Black Creek" Mr. Fenwick, "a severe, dyed-in-the-wool Englishman", decided it was time for "his emancipation from his groping, sand-beetle life. As his son later suggested, Fenwick felt it was time to go to work with his mind instead of with his muscles so he moved his family to Zurich and operated a grist mill and saw mill there for a time. The bigger village of Exeter, however, beckoned him and he packed up his wagon and took his family to Exeter where in 1875 he opened a flour and grist mill on the north west corner of the Francistown crossroads on property owned by Abel Walper. Fenwick's son George describes the family's entry into Exeter as follows:

> "Our entry into Exeter during the summer of 1875 behind our span of bays and in a light wagon was a characteristic one for that period. Neither was it attended with any degree of pomp or ceremony. We (us kids) were chattering and yammering like a surprised herd of caged monkeys. Restraint — an unknown quantity with us — had completely disappeared into the deepest oblivion. For here at last was the promised land, the new haven of our speculations, a fruitful field through and by which we could exercise our innocent deviltry. We had completely forgotten the admonition of brother Bill back along the road before entering Hensall when he cautioned:
>
> "Now you kids don't want to look and act like a lot of jayhooks when we reach Exeter. Look and act as if you knew something." Good advice, but about as effective as trying to wash the face of the moon with a cup of water. For as we rumbled along the road leading into Francistown, there, bulking large in the distance, was Father's new mill — still in the course of construction — which brought forth many yaps and yells and exclamations of astonishment and delight."

The mill was an imposing sight being four stories high. The opening of the mill was celebrated in a grand style in the Walper Hotel saloon which became a favorite haunt of the farmers who brought their grain to Fenwick's mill. After the local gentry received their money from Fenwick for their grain, they crossed the road to spend it in Walper's saloon on stale beer, cheese and bologna sandwiches.

Fenwick evidently gave James Pickard some stiff competition in the milling business since it is recorded that Fenwick "aroused the anger of The Boss." Until Fenwick's opening Pickard had dominated the milling business in the area.

Fenwick's mill, contrary to all predictions, succeeded and he shipped flour all over Western Ontario and Quebec. The mill's operations were directed by the head miller, August Ennic and Tom Pennell, the chief engineer and fireman. He had his own teams and freight wagons for drawing flour to Goderich, Hensall, Seaforth and other surrounding villages. Victor Muthart was one of the drivers.

5 The Flax Mill

This mill was located on the Lake Road west of the Francistown crossroads. It was first erected in June 1877 by Messrs. Paton and Dorward. These gentlemen sold the business to J. Sweitzer in the mid 1880's for twenty five hundred dollars. Sweitzer had some trouble with a female admirer shortly after he acquired the flax mill. In 1886 it was reported in the Times that a lady named Elizabeth Spawn tried to burn the mill down after Sweitzer had refused to marry her. Constable Gill had to arrest Elizabeth and send the poor girl to the Goderich Gaol where she was able to spend some time pondering upon her unfortunate love life.

The mill used locally grown flax which was pulled by local labor. Flax pulling was hard work and in July 1894 the pullers walked out of the fields and struck for higher wages. Anarchy in Exeter! The Times was appalled. The editor went so far as to compare the "wicked strikers" to those involved in the recent "Great Strike" in the United States. The workers were given a small increase. G. and J. Kellerman who bought the mill in 1900 averted another strike by increasing the pay to the munificent sum of twenty five cents for a twelve hour day. From seven in the morning until seven at night the flax was pulled, tied in sheaves, loaded on wagons and taken to the mill where it was threshed for seed. The fibres were then spread on the ground to rot after which the fibrous material was taken to the factory for preparation of the flax fibre.

In 1920 the mill burned and William H. Johnston who moved to Exeter in 1920 after a teaching career wrote a poem about the flax mill fire. In the poem he describes how the flax mill burned but how the firemen raced and worked and toiled beyond compare to save the storehouse. Johnston wrote how "we hope to see a better mill arise" and in 1921 a new mill was built by the Ontario Flax Company. In 1923 Owen Geiger purchased the mill. Geiger continued to employ Joseph Davis as mill manager. Davis had managed the mill for over thirty years and had worked for all of the mill owners. Davis died in 1961 at the age of 93. Geiger closed the mill in 1930. It was never reopened. The last use for the buildings was as storage for Cann's Mills. This storage barn still stands.

6 Francistown gristmills

John MacDonald and the Hutton Company are listed as the operators in the 1860's. This mill may later have been McLennan's Mill.

Other Industries and Manufacturing

There were a number of other manufacturing activities worth mentioning. The Gidley Furniture factory was one of Exeter's early industries having been established by Thomas Gidley in 1859. The following is taken from an item in the Times-Advocate of June 1, 1944. Harry Gidley, the last of the Gidleys to live in Exeter died that year and the article from which the following is taken was written at that time.

> "Thomas Gidley had been a cabinet maker and a member of the cabinet guilds in London, England, and it is on record in the London City Hall, that he had repaired the London City gates.
>
> Seeing the great need for household furniture in this new land where tables, benches and bedsteads had all to be made by hand, he started a chair and furniture factory . . .
>
> Before emigrating to Canada Thomas Gidley had served an apprenticeship of seven years and became a master workman . . . He brought his tools with him and many of those fine hand-working steel and wooden planing and carving tools are in Harry Gidley's shop today."

Thomas Gidley's shop was built in 1859 where the Beaver Lumber Company's buildings now stand. He took his three sons Richard, Charles and Samuel into the furniture business.

> "From the beginning they found it difficult to supply the pressing demand for household furniture and the venture proved to be a profitable one."

The Gidleys also built the so-called "Oddfellows Block" and Samuel and Charles operated both a furniture and undertaking business there. Harry Gidley is remembered in Exeter for his musical ability and his contribution to Exeter bands: he was leader of the Exeter Brass Band and founder and leader of the Exeter Orchestra. Harry filled orders for individual hand polished pieces and fancy articles in woodwork for customers in Exeter and from coast to coast. Harry made many hand polished coffee tables, solid and durable. The tops were made of beautiful curly maple that he salvaged from a lumber pile that was about to be used as firewood. The trim on the legs and the inlaid portions of the top were black walnut obtained in Port Franks from George Hurdon, son of the former Exeter banker N. Dyer Hurdon, where it had lain in the bottom of the river for decades.

Furniture made by Thomas Gidley, his sons, and grandsons may be found in various places throughout Canada and the United States.

The Gidleys sold their first place of business in 1888 when they moved to the Oddfellows Block. On the site of this first Gidley fur-

niture factory was established a business which proved to be one of Exeter's most durable. The Ross and Taylor Planing Mill was started in 1876 by the Ross brothers and Davidson. In February 1877 J. W. Taylor joined Ross in the business which was then located on Andrew Street where H. Bishop later built a house. In 1888 the firm purchased the Gidley Bros. Factory and in 1903 the firm built a new brick building on the site and purchased John Willis' lumber yard which was located just across the street. Willis had established his lumber business about 1870. Ross and Taylor continued to expand, and in 1905 they constructed a new saw mill and large drying kiln. That was the year that the Sutherland and Innis mill closed. Messrs. Ross and Taylor felt that the village needed a saw mill so they had one erected. It was also in 1905 that the Ross and Taylor Company Limited was incorporated. In that year the company employed ten steady men and several part time employees. The books for 1905 showed five thousand dollars paid in wages, seventeen thousand dollars for stock, and three thousand for freight. The manager of the mill from 1908 to 1931 was J. R. Hind.

In 1931 the business was sold to Messrs. Morse and Gordon by the remaining partner J. W. Taylor. Ross died in 1913. Taylor died in 1933. The business passed through several ownerships including that of Messrs. Henderson and Sweitzer. A. J. Sweitzer erected a new building in 1947. In recent years the business was acquired by the Beaver Lumber Company; this company occupies the site at present.

Shortly after the turn of the century the Connor Brothers Machine Company was opened at the corner of William and Wellington Streets. The Conners manufactured air cooled engines and various other items of a mechanical nature, including railroad velocipedes, the Connor Washing Machine, and at least one automobile. This may have been the only car ever built in Exeter although a man named Kurtze once requested a loan of five thousand dollars from Council in order to erect a motor car plant in Exeter. Nothing, as far as it is known, ever became of this proposal. The Connor car, however, did run. Luther Penhale once took it for a drive and the car heated up so badly that it could not be driven.

In 1920 J. G. "Goldie" Cochrane from Kitchener purchased the Conner Machine Company and operated the business as Cochrane's Machine Shop. Cochrane had an interesting sports background and contributed greatly to sports, particularly hockey in Exeter. His sports activities are commented on elsewhere in this book. Cochrane's shop was closed before the second war.

A small manufacturing establishment existed at the corner of James and Andrew Streets in the 1870's, Messrs. Funston and

Hillard operated a Carpenter and Joiner Shop there for a number of years. The Heaman Rake and Cradle Factory operated a mile south of the village until it burned in 1884. Richard Manning's Cheese Factory was established fairly early in Exeter's history. Manning was one of the early arrivals, coming in 1855 or 1856. The date that he began operating his factory is not known but it is known that in 1869 this factory manufactured fourteen tons of cheese. Manning had sixty cows in his own stable and no doubt purchased additional milk. In the 1890's The Exeter Butter and Cheese Manufacturing Company, a subsidiary of the Davis and Rankin Company of Chicago, operated in Exeter. According to one report they claimed to have a one thousand cow capacity. It may be that this company took over Richard Manning's factory although this is not known nor is the location of the factory known. A. Q. Bobier's Creamery was another important dairy products operation in Exeter. Snell Brothers Pork Packing Plant was started in the 1890's in James Pickard's old brick building on James Street. Louis Day came from London to be foreman of the plant.

For several decades the Exeter Roller Mills was one of Exeter's important business concerns. A grist and flour mill was started in 1890 by Messrs. Rollins and Williams. Their mill burned in 1892 and the partners purchased the old Pickard Mill, together with the house and adjoining land, the house being the one now occupied as the Ausable Authority Office. A price of one thousand dollars was paid by Rollins and Williams for all of this property. Instead of reopening the old mill, however, Rollins and Williams erected a new mill in 1894 on property purchased from Mr. Hooper on Main Street. They sold the mill to Cobbledick and Sons in 1898 who had been in the grain business. They sold the business to the Harvey Brothers, Thomas J. S. and W. H., in 1902.

The Harveys renovated the mill, installing three new choppers and began what was to remain a very successful business for many years. By 1906 the mill was flourishing for in that year the Harveys shipped ten thousand sacks of flour to the United Kingdom alone. To meet its production schedule the mill ran day and night. There was a large market for their Welcome Flour, Pure Manitoba Flour and Star Flour throughout Western Ontario as well as other points in Canada and abroad. In addition to using some local soft wheat the mill used thousands of bushels of hard western wheat each year.

This large volume of wheat, which was brought in each year amounted to as much as two hundred and eighty thousand bushels in some years, plus the large shipments of flour going out prompted serious agitation by the mill and the village council for the construction of a railway siding to the mill. It had long been felt in Exeter that the railroad and the station being "far from the leading hotels and places of business was in an unhandy spot. It will be recalled that it was inadequate railway service that contributed to Verity's move and later the Harveys found the railway service less than adequate. No line was ever built to the mill however.

By the 1930's the mill was beginning to decline. A combination of factors, including the death of the original partners, the non-successful management by those who followed and perhaps most important the severe competition from the large flour milling concerns resulted in the eventual closing of the flour mill. It was sold to the Cann family who subsequently have established a prosperous feed mill operation.

Messrs Dyer, Oke and Howard operated the Exeter Planing Mill, Sash, Door and Blind Factory which began in the 1860's on Wellington Street. In 1901 the mill burned and at a public meeting following the fire Council was instructed by the ratepayers present to lend the firm six thousand dollars in order that the mill might be rebuilt. The loan was to be conditional upon the consent of rival institutions being forthcoming. The only competitor to give consent was the firm of Ross and Taylor; consequently, the burned mill could not be rebuilt. The creditors had to settle for fifty cents on the dollar.

The Exeter Salt Works began production from a well fifteen hundred feet deep located immediately west of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway near the present canning factory in the 1880's. Among the chief shareholders in the company were W. G. Bissett, T. B. Carling and D. Mills. Most of the salt produced was sold in the immediate area. In 1924 the well was purchased by Mr. Ransford from Clinton who operated it for a few years until the frame building housing the works burned. Today only the tall chimney marks the site of this industrial activity. It is worthy of note that the Salt Company sent an exhibit of salt and brine to the Paris Exhibition and received a diploma for the exhibit.

Other small industries could be mentioned. G. and J. Brooks Carriage Factory, George Davis Marble Works located just north of the Main Street Methodist Church, Hazelwood Brothers — Acetylene Gas Machines are some that come to mind. Eldred Drew, William Drew and John Drew are names that are associated with furniture making in Exeter. The location of the various Drew operations is somewhat confusing and more is said later in the chapter about the Drews but William's shop and store apparently were found where Dinney Furniture is now and Eldred's shop was at the rear of Mace's store on the west side of Main Street. Eldred Drew employed from nine to fifteen men in his cabinet making shop in the 1870's. Israel Smith was Exeter's first bicycle maker. W

D. Weekes established the Exeter Marble Works in 1878 on the premises now occupied by Pryde Monuments. Weekes was chairman of the Exeter Library Board for twenty years. W. D. Weekes designed a granite monument for a New Brunswick Company to send to the Paris Exhibition early in the century. The monument won a silver medal. There was another Marble Shop operated by George Davis north of Main Street Church; it was torn down in April 1901.

John Trick built carriages, wagons, buggies, sleighs, cutters and did general blacksmithing. He had two buildings on Main Street somewhere south of Ross and Taylor; one building was brick and measured forty-two feet by twenty-four feet. The other was frame and was eighty feet long and twenty-two feet wide. Trick's shop employed ten men which made it an important village industry from the 1850's when it was established until it was purchased by James Dignan, a former apprentice of Trick's, in 1878.

Richard Davis, another blacksmith, had a large shop. He began working in Exeter in the late 1850's or early 1860's and eventually built up a business that employed nine men to work his four forges. His shop was at one time located where the post office is now and measured sixty feet by twenty-five feet. The numerous other blacksmiths that had shops in Exeter will be considered in the chapter on transportation. Blacksmith shops are mentioned here because they often were in the small towns and villages of Ontario important manufacturing operations.

Isaac Carling's Tannery which was established on the corner of Anne and Main Street in 1847 remained an operating industry in Exeter for several decades using local hides and local hemlock and oak as a source of tannin.

The Jackson Manufacturing Company was owned by Thomas Jackson of Clinton. He had factories in Seaforth, Goderich, Clinton and Hensall as well as Exeter where the operation was located in James Pickard's old store. The company began in Exeter in 1911 and produced clothing of various kinds, including overalls, suits, overcoats and army trousers during the First World War. G. W. Davis was manager and A. Perritt chief cutter. The clothing operated under the label "Lions Brand". In 1923 the firm was bankrupt and the Exeter branch was purchased by S. M. Sanders. It operated as the S. M. Sanders Manufacturing Company from 1923 to 1929 when Sanders sold the old building to "Sandy" Elliot who used it at that time as a garage and automobile showroom. Elliot still owns the building which now contains apartments and stores including the Canadian Tire Corporation.

An important Exeter industry traces its origins to the year 1887 when J. G. Jones leased the Winchelsea general store from Fred

Godbolt Jones had been a school teacher first at Khiva and then at the Eden school but had decided that there was a better living to be made in business. He operated the Winchelsea store where he developed an extensive dry goods and grocery business as well as establishing an impressive business in poultry and seeds, until 1905 when he moved to Exeter. He purchased E. J. Spackman's stores on the corner of Main and John Streets. In 1908 he expanded southwards and purchased Farmer's grocery business which was located where Smythes Shoe Store is now. Jones established a seed milling plant in this building. Jones purchased the Farmer liquor store in 1915; this frame building had been the old Bible Christian Church and was by 1915 becoming dilapidated. Jones moved this building to the rear of his stores and housed poultry there; he erected the brick building which is now the Town Clerk's office. By 1915 Jones owned the land and buildings from John Street south to the bank.

J. G. Jones died in 1927 and his son Hubert expanded the seed business to the point where in 1947 a new, modern seed mill was erected on John Street on property acquired from J. G. Dow. This property had been the site of the well known horse barns operated by McDonnell and Bawden and later Dow. Hubert Jones had been joined by C. S. MacNaughton and the new seed business was called The Jones and MacNaughton Seed Company. The company thrived for about twenty years and was eventually sold. As a result of various transactions the business is now owned by the Maple Leaf Milling Company. Further comments are found on later pages about other Jones businesses.

Other manufacturing activities in Exeter included such pioneer industries as the shipping of leached ashes and the shipping of ice from the river. The Times noted on February 2, 1888 that "the ice on the river is very thick and of good quality. The hotels and others are at present engaged in putting away a supply for summer's use."

This brief summary of Exeter's past industrial and manufacturing activity indicates a number of interesting facts. It demonstrates that a small Ontario town had a considerable variety of manufacturing. This variety reveals the degree of local self-sufficiency that existed since a small town like Exeter did manufacture a great list of items such as agricultural tools, wagons, furniture, salt, flour and so on. Agricultural products were processed in the village which was the local market centre. It is also noteworthy that in the last half of the nineteenth century industrial activity in Ontario was decentralized and spread over the towns and villages of the province. Naturally the less complete transportation network contributed to this but so did the absence of as many large corporations. The small entrepreneur characterized the small towns. In Exeter the industries noted on the previous pages were mainly small operations. The Verity Plough Company did grow to become a good sized industry and the founder W. H. Verity and his sons did become important figures in the industrial history of Ontario. Most small manufacturers did not, however, achieve the level of success of the Verity company. In Exeter many of the concerns noted provided a good living for their owners and contributed to the economy of the village providing a variety of employment opportunities. Few of the industries established in Exeter exist at the present time having succumbed to the centralizing trend in Ontario, to the changing technology and to the competition of the large corporation.

One industrial operation which has survived in Exeter for many decades however, is the canning factory. Today this is Exeter's largest industrial activity and can show almost continuous operation since its beginning in 1906. In that year the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company was established. The company was started initially as a result of Reeve A. Q. Bobier's leadership in getting the factory started. It is true that both the Times and the Advocate had been urging for years that Exeter obtain a canning factory and it is also true that a man named Wagner had started a small cannery in 1904. However it was Reeve Bobier who must be credited with providing the initial stimulus. Bobier interested a group of local businessmen in the idea of a canning factory and then he convinced Council to lend ten thousand dollars to the group to provide additional capital to get the factory built. The ratepayers approved a loan for the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company by a vote of three hundred and thirty seven to twenty seven and the Directors of the Company received the ten thousand dollar loan from the village.

Shares were sold at twenty five dollars each to local businessmen with most of the shares being purchased by the following men who formed the first Board of Directors, these were Joseph Snell who was manager of the Sovereign Bank, R. G. Seldon, J. G. Jones, S. Martin, J. Huslet, C. H. Sanders, W. D. Sanders, Thomas Harvey and A. Marchand. The company first bought Wagner's small cannery and redeemed for thirty dollars each the two hundred shares which Wagner had sold. A site was then selected for the factory. The site selected was the property at the rear of John Mitchell's Temperance House, near the Railway on Wellington Street. The company also purchased the Mitchell Temperance Hotel and removed the building using the salvaged material to erect two storage sheds. The new factory building was one hundred and seventy feet by forty feet, the boiler room's chimney was twenty-five feet high. The contractors were G. Heaman and J. Jewell. Production began in 1906 or 1907 under the management of "chief processor" C. F. Seawright who left in 1911 to go to Philadelphia. In that year S. M. Sanders took over as manager. The first brand canned was "Excelsior Peas" which were packed in some of the first "sanitary cans" used in Canada; these new cans were introduced in 1912. The peas grown locally were purchased from the growers for one and one-half cents per pound.

By the 1920's the ownership of the firm was concentrated in the hands of various members of the Sanders family as a result the Board of Directors was largely composed of Sanders. There were several Sanders families in Exeter. William Sanders was one of the early arrivals in Exeter another was Samuel Sanders Sr. who also came quite early to Exeter from Devonshire. Both acquired land on the west side of Exeter, Samuel farming on the west edge of town for some years. Samuel raised a family of four sons and four daughters; the sons were Samuel M., W. D., D. B., and J. A. The first two named played prominent roles in the affairs of Exeter for many years. When old Sam died in February, 1917, at the age of eighty-two it was remarked in the Advocate that "one after another the pioneer residents are passing to their rest leaving only the lustre of their untarnished names and the example of their lives for the guidance and emulation of the younger generation."

Three of Samuel's sons, W. D., J. A., and S. M. became major shareholders in the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company and were Directors of the Company. The other four Directors in the 1920's were C. H. Sanders and R. N. Creech of the Advocate, F. W. Gladman and L. H. Dickson. Of the seven Directors named above only six were shareholders and these six held all of the shares of the Company.

In 1923 the Board made the decision to sell the Company to the Canadian Canners Limited of Hamilton. Luther Penhale was named manager in 1924. Penhale had various schemes in addition to his immediate job of managing the factory. For example, one year he had thirty tons of wild strawberries harvested in the area and shipped to Hamilton for processing. Penhale eventually assumed a supervisory role with the Canadian Canners. Over the years the other managers of the local factory have been B. R. Bartow, John Bales, E. J. Green, H. K. Penhale, D. Graham and J. Urquhart the present manager. These men have supervised the factory's operations which have included the processing of peas, corn, carrots, sauerkraut, tomatoes, apples, pears and asparagus.

In 1943 the factory was rebuilt by contractor Roy Dewar and in 1944 a pipeline was built from the Exeter dam to the factory. In the 1950's the Morrison Dam was built under the direction of the Ausable Conservation Authority and supported strongly by the

Town of Exeter because it guaranteed the Canning Factory a steady supply of river water for cooling and washing. The town also constructed a filtration plant to filter the water going to the factory. With these expenditures having been made the town was understandably concerned in 1958 when it was rumored that the factory would close and the rumors appeared to be true when the factory did not operate during the 1958 canning season. It appeared that the famous Aylmer label might not be shipped again from Exeter. The factory had provided an important market for local agricultural products and provided employment to the community.

In 1959 it was announced that the California Packing Company had acquired the controlling interest in Canadian Canners Limited. It was with relief that Exeter learned that the new company would not only reopen the Exeter plant but also planned a program of improvement and modernization. A number of improvements, enlargements and additions have since been made to the factory which continues to operate as a branch of Canadian Canners having added to the traditional Aylmer label the California company's Delmonte brand.

So since 1906 this industrial operation has been an important contributor to the economy of the area. There are few people left who worked for the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company when it started in 1906; one of these is Mr. J. Elliott who worked for the old company in 1906 and who was employed in the factory for well over fifty years. Since this was written Mr. Elliott has died.

In addition to the canning factory there have been many businesses and industries in Exeter which are directly related to agriculture. Indeed, the real economic base of the town has always been agriculture. Some other business activities in Exeter whose basis was agriculture are noted below. W. H. Levitt operated a produce business on Main Street north of where the I.G.A. is now. Levitt dealt in butter, eggs, feathers, vegetables and other produce. This business was eventually acquired by W. C. Allison and after that by Canada Packers. Seth Winer's turnip plant, Wein Brothers, Exeter Rutabaga Company, Exeter Produce, various hatcheries, farm implement and machinery dealers further illustrate the agricultural base. Mention was made previously of various cheese and butter processors, other creamery operators in Exeter were A. Q. Bobier, W. G. Medd, William Hatter, N. Stanlake. Today only the Exeter Dairy processes milk in Exeter.

Also associated with the processing and marketing of agricultural products were such people as W. Hardy and J. Cobbledick, grain buyers. Cobbledick had an office where Johnson's motor repair shop is now. Cobbledick bought grain from the farmers who gathered in the area directly across the road. One amusing incident about Cobbledick's office concerns the time that someone, probably Lancelot Hardy, put a cow in Cobbledick's office one night. When Cobbledick opened up in the morning he found an incredible shambles; he was furious and immediately blamed Hardy who, of course, denied doing it.

We mentioned A. Q. Bobier who dealt in eggs, butter, sugar beets and other produce. His large creamery began operating in 1896 and it is recorded that in 1898 he shipped thirty thousand pounds of butter worth ten thousand dollars to Dawson City. Bobier owned land, produced livestock and was generally one of the village's successful businessmen. He served on Council for a number of years. Bobier left Exeter before World War One and died in 1922 in Buffalo.

The horse trade was a major business in Exeter for decades. One of the most widely known horse dealers was William Bawden who also was an early Reeve of the village. Bawden migrated from Devonshire to Exeter in 1858. He and A. McDonnell imported horses from Scotland, Belgium and France for over thirty years. Bawden made thirty-eight trips to Europe to buy horses. William Bawden died appropriately enough in his buggy on October 17, 1913; his horse took him home. The Bawden-McDonnell barns were on John Street where the seed plant now stands. These premises saw some of the finest horses ever to come to Canada. J. G. Dow later operated the barn. Bissett, Handford and others were also active in the horse trade which will be more fully treated in the chapter dealing with transportation.

In commenting on the agricultural base of the village a word should be said about the farmers' markets. There were several locations in Exeter which served as a market. The first plan of Exeter, which we noted previously was prepared in 1855, left a block which on later maps was designated as the Market Square. This block is now Victoria Park. Information regarding its market function is sketchy; it did not apparently function very long but it is noted in early papers that it became a fenced pasture area for cattle and eventually became overgrown. In the 1890's Joseph Acheson and some others donated the area to the Village. Apparently Acheson was instrumental in having the area cleaned up and having trees planted. The park was once called Jubilee Park and then Victoria Park. There was also a farmers' market for a time near the Town Hall. It was opened every Saturday morning in the 1890's. A farmers' grain market was located on the corner of Main and Wellington where in 1877 wheat sold for one dollar and seventy-five cents to two dollars and sixty cents a bushel. The price of wheat sixty years later in Exeter was sixty cents per bushel and is now about

two dollars and twenty-five cents. We should also add that suppliers of farm machinery have been important Exeter businessmen from the days of Verity and W. J. Bissett's Deering Harvesting Company agency to the present.

One last example will summarize the important relationship between the village and the agricultural community. The following statistics are for the period Monday November 6, 1890 to Thursday of the same week. During these four days the following shipments were made from the Exeter Station on the London, Huron and Bruce Railway. The Exeter Milling Company shipped several loads of flour. A. Q. Bobier shipped several carloads of turnips to the United States. R. S. Laing, "The apple king" shipped three hundred and twenty barrels of apples. H. Willert shipped two carloads of lambs and a carload of horses; several carloads of poultry and eggs were also shipped. This was not unusual; these shipments illustrate how active the Exeter Station was in the shipment of agricultural products. It was noted, for example, in February, 1913 that during the preceding year four hundred and sixty tons of butter had been shipped from the three creameries, Exeter, Winchelsea and Centralia. It was also reported in the same month that 55 car loads or 1400 tons of sugarbeets had been shipped from the Exeter Station.

We have been concerned up to this point with the different kinds of manufacturing and processing activities that have been found in Exeter. There were a good many other business concerns and it is to these which were mostly found on the Main Street that we want to turn.

Exeter's business efforts were chronicled by the weekly newspaper. The doings of Main Street, the churches, the social events, the sports, the births and deaths, in short every aspect of life was covered in the pages of the weekly paper. The first paper to be established in the village was "The Times". This paper began in August, 1873. Within two years it had over nine hundred subscribers. The founder, publisher and editor was John White, a staunch Conservative, who pulled no punches when it came to letting the 'Grits' have a blast of his hostility. White did, indeed, follow his own motto which appeared on his paper's front page each week: "Hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may." White's first office and printing shop was located in a frame building on Main Street across from Molson's Bank which was then located one building south of the store presently occupied by Dinney's Furniture Store. The paper moved to its present location in the 1880's. Thomas M. White who helped John on the Times later started the St. Marys Journal and in 1881 the Windsor Review.

Perhaps the most famous individual ever to be associated with the "Times" was Sir John Willison. Willison was born in Hills Green in 1856. Sometime in 1873 or 1874 Willison left home and eventually headed south along the London Road. Upon reaching Exeter he looked around for work and ended up in the employ of John White as a "Printer's devil" at a salary of twenty-five dollars per year. A few days after beginning his employment, Willison wrote an article describing his walk from Hills Green to Exeter. The idea was that the piece should appear in "The Times". White's son was favourably impressed and suggested to his father that the piece should be printed and that young Willison should do some more writing. John White said no, Willison was a "printer's devil" and no more. The young John Willison realizing that his talents were not appreciated in Exeter left clandestinely a few nights later, by climbing out his bedroom window above the shop. He moved on to London where he worked for the "London Advertiser". In the 1880's he went to the "Globe" in Toronto where he rose to become editor-in-chief and one of Canada's major political journalists. He became a close friend of Sir Wilfred Laurier. In 1913 he was awarded a knighthood. Willison in his "Reminiscences" recalls his two weeks with the "Times". It is not every Ontario weekly that can claim association with such ranking journalists as Willison. J. M. Southcott later was pleased to be able to write about Willison's brief apprenticeship with "The Times".

From 1873 to 1906 the "Times" was a White family enterprise with John White being the publisher and editor until his death in 1900. At that time Millar White became editor and publisher with the able assistance of his sister Matilda. Millar died in 1902 after suffering serious injuries in a fall on the ice while on his way to church. Matilda and J. J. White carried on the publication of the "Times".

In 1906 the Whites purchased the "Crediton News" and "The Dashwood Pioneer" from F. J. Wickwire. The Exeter Times Printing Company was formed as a stock company with J. J. White as President. The other officers were J. G. Stanbury, Vice-President, and Wickwire, Secretary. In 1909 White retired and J. G. Stanbury became President. Mel Southcott the diminutive "printer's devil" of only seven years previous purchased White's shares. Southcott purchased Wickwire's shares in 1911 and became editor and manager of the company at a salary of sixty five dollars per month. By 1941 J. M. Southcott had acquired all of the capital shares of the Exeter Times-Advocate, the Advocate having amalgamated with the Times in 1924 just two years after the company had acquired the Hensall Observer from Wickwire.

On June 9, 1887 Thomas Passmore took over as the publisher of Exeter's second newspaper. He published the first issue of the "Exeter Advocate" on that date in his offices at the corner of John and Main Streets. Passmore was actually continuing a second paper in the village rather than starting a new venture since the "Exeter Reflector" had been published from 1877 to 1887. The "Reflector" was founded by Dr. H. M. Cowen and later edited and published by George Mott, a former principal of the St. Marys Public School. The "Reflector" was Conservative and Anti Temperance. Mott gave up the newspaper in 1887 and the equipment was taken over by Passmore who named the paper the "Advocate".

The "Advocate" was to be diametrically opposite in its principles to the "Reflector", since, as Passmore wrote, "the paper will be conducted on Reform Principles and will give that Party hearty support". Passmore deserved credit for his courage in publishing a Liberal journal in opposition to the Conservative "Times" in Conservative Exeter. Passmore also wrote that his paper would be "the worthy exponent and advocate of that Great Movement Prohibition". The Liberal Advocate lasted only six months. In January 1888 Passmore sold out to William Sanders who wrote in the first issue to be published under his management that "we wish it to be distinctly understood that this paper will be strictly conducted upon a purely Conservative basis". So Exeter again had two Conservative papers and this was to remain the situation until the Whites gave up the "Times" to Southcott and Stanbury who were both Liberals and gave moderate support to that party, although the "Times" did not become as vehemently Liberal as it had been Conservative. Further discussion of the political nature of the newspapers may be found in the chapter on politics.

The "Advocate" was printed in the offices at the corner of John and Main Streets until 1890 when it moved to the location where Sanders grocery store is now found. George Manson took over the former office and sold boots and shoes there. The Advocate remained in the Sanders family until its amalgamation with the Times in 1924. In that year C. H. Sanders and his associate R. N. Creech gave up the newspaper. Creech, incidentally, lived to the ripe age of eighty five, dying in 1960. He had taught school at Sharon, had been an associate with C. H. Sanders in the Advocate, was involved with the canning factory and made an important contribution to the life of Exeter as a member of the Board of Education for thirty-seven years, as chairman of the hospital board and a member of many other organizations. Further comment on Mr. Creech is found in other chapters. His wife was Edith Sanders.

Consequently, since 1924 Exeter had only one newspaper to chronicle its affairs. The Exeter Times Advocate since 1941 has been entirely owned and operated by the Southcotts. Politically the paper is officially independent but from about 1909 to 1950 or so it did give moderate support to the Liberal party. For the past twenty odd years, however, the paper has tended to support the local Conservative candidates.

In 1962, J. M. Southcott completed sixty years in newspaper work and in 1963 was named "Weekly newspaper man of the year". J. M. Southcott died in 1969 leaving the management of The Exeter Times Advocate to his son Robert Southcott. The paper is one of the province's best weeklies and the printing establishment is one of the most modern in Western Ontario.

In addition to the weekly paper which was, of course, the official source of news on "Main Street" there were the barber shops of the village. On a Saturday night the barber shops were especially active and were open until very late, perhaps ten or eleven o'clock as the villagers and the farmers gathered to talk and get trimmed up for Sunday. Those were the

> "days of the old hitching posts,
> dusty, gravelled Main Street,
> coal oil lamps on top of posts
> situated at the corners of the
> street that had to be cleaned
> and refilled each day by Town Constable
> James Creech. Then came the carbon
> electric lights in the centre of the streets.
> The carbons came together in a glass
> covering and the sparks from the carbon
> created a brilliant light. These lights
> came on at dusk and were out at midnight."

These were also the days when the stores opened everyday at seven or eight in the morning and closed at nine or ten in the evening and on Saturday at twelve midnight or later.

The saloons in the hotels, the stores, the barbershops were busy on a Saturday night. The streets were crowded with horse drawn vehicles and bicycles. Boys ran up and down the streets, people shopped and gossiped. Saturday night in an Ontario small town was the most exciting time of the week. Today Exeter is dormant on Saturday night. As was mentioned the barber shops were centres of village news. One of the early barbers in Exeter was E. Fish who opened his shop in 1875 and carried on his trade until 1906. The shop was located where Wuerth's store is presently located.

Castor Willis took over the Fish barber shop in 1906 having served his apprenticeship with Fish. Ed Willis took over after Castor. Another early shop was the "Central Barber Shop and Tonsorial Parlor". Charles Manning operated this shop until 1888 when he left Exeter for Dodge City in search of adventure. There is

no record, however, of his ever shaving Marshall Dillon! Ike Dearing took over this shop which was one door north of the Central Hotel.

The shop in the basement of what is now Bell and Laughton's law office was operated first by A. Hastings. He called it the "Exeter Barber Shop" and advertised "shaving and hair cutting in the latest styles of the art." This shop was operated over the years by Frank Boyle, Elmore Harness, "Chick" McCurdy but Hastings was probably the most colorful in that he enjoyed a close relationship with John Barleycorn. When under the influence, the quality of his conversation went up but evidently one could not say the same for the quality of his haircuts. It is likely that he gave some of his shaving customers a fright as he wielded the razor. The shop was the headquarters of Exeter's baseball and hockey experts when it was being operated by Frank "Derry" Boyle.

Haircut prices a few decades ago were twenty five cents for adults, fifteen cents for children, shaves were fifteen cents. Many customers had their own shaving mugs on the shelf of the shop.

In many ways the typical Exeter businessmen was the general merchant. Every Ontario small town had the general merchant. Frequently he became the town's most well to do businessman. Many of them had various business interests. In Exeter a number of names come to mind of men whose basic enterprise was the store but who had other businesses as well.

In Exeter the first two names obviously are Isaac Carling and James Pickard. Other storekeepers who come to mind are Joseph

Exeter's Main Street fifty years ago
Note the Central Hotel in the foreground

This scene of Exeter's Main Street looks south along the east side of the street.

Acheson, Richard Pickard, George Samwell, R. E. Pickard, T. B. and W. J. Carling, George Mace, Farmer Brothers, and Jones and May. There are a number of others who will also be mentioned in the following pages which deal with the stores and businesses of Exeter's Main Street.

As we have already noted the first three stores to be established in Exeter were Isaac Carling's general store, Joseph Acheson's shoe making establishment, and James Pickard's store which eventually became the largest store in the village. James Pickard as we previously noted had come to this area about 1852. He first established a small store somewhere along the third concession of Usborne Township. A short time later he moved to Exeter where he soon constructed his large store. Pickard as we noted had a number of enterprises. He built a sawmill and a grist mill as well as the store. He farmed land on the east side of Exeter and raised livestock including the production of the largest steer ever seen in the area. "General Pickard" weighed three thousand eight hundred and forty pounds and was thirteen and one-half feet long. Pickard sold the steer to buyers in Berlin (Kitchener).

His big store was Exeter's "Old Reliable House" and occupied all of the big building on Main Street south of James Street. Incidentally, the name of the street is for James Pickard. This store sold all types of goods and occupied the three floors of the building. In 1889 the store had forty-six employees in hardware, tin shop, groceries, dry goods, millinery, tailor shop and other areas. Some of these employees were Wes Creech, Will Folland, W. H. Moncur, D. Tait, J. Bissett, G. Sheere, William Creech, Will Quance, to name only a few. There were ten young ladies employed in the store including Miss Weekes, Miss Barrett, Miss Vosper, and Miss Dawn. Another Pickard employee was Frank Tom who left Exeter in 1887; he went to Ohio where he eventually was elected to the Senate as a Republican. His brother J. E. Tom was a school inspector in Huron County for many years. Pickard also employed other men as teamsters, one of these was Frank Gill.

The building now occupied by the Exeter Furniture Company was James Pickard's warehouse. The building may have been built in the late 1850's or early 1860's and since Pickard's time it has been used as a pork packing plant, a horse barn (Tom Handford), a garage (Kernick and Pilon), a turnip plant (S. Winer), a truckers' garage (Bagshaw), a furniture plant (Jenson and McCaffrey). Sam Sanders owned the building for many years.

Sol Davis Feed Store

It was James Pickard together with Isaac Carling and one or two others who had the first village plan prepared in 1855. There are arguments over who gave Exeter its name. It was suggested in the Times that Carling "although a Yorkshireman christened Exeter"; the more likely possibility, however, is that James Pickard having come from Devon and knowing that the settlement was dominated by Devon men selected the name. It was Pickard and Carling who also led the move for Exeter's incorporation as a village. Pickard was one of Exeter's leading citizens for over fifty years and people talked about his widespread business activities, referring to him as "Storekeeper Pickard" or "Farmer Pickard" or "Miller Pickard" or "Boss Pickard" depending on the ci cumstances. In addition to the store, the sawmill, the grist mill and the farmland, Pickard also had two large stables on the land about where the high school is now. He owned most of the land on the east side of Main Street at one time or another; he bought grain also. He owned several houses including a large one where Snell Brothers is now located. This large house was the place where many of Pickard's employees from the store boarded. Mrs. Pickard fed them, no small feat since their numbers were large.

Pickard opened stores in the late 1880's in Seaforth, Blenheim and St. Marys. So as we note Pickard was involved in virtually every type of enterprise that characterized rural Western Ontario during the last half of the 1800's. He must be classed as one of this area's leading businessmen.

It was surprising and shocking, then, to the people of Exeter to read in the Times of November 7, 1889 the following item:

> It is with regret we announce the financial failure of Mr. James Pickard, the oldest merchant in Exeter. Mr. Pickard had been in straightened circumstances for years .... On Wednesday last the final move was enacted by his assigning in trust to Mr. George Samwell for the benefit of his creditors whose claims aggregate a sum over one hundred thousand dollars.

Pickard had over-extended himself, particularly in the purchasing of large stocks for the store. The opening of the stores in the other towns was done in an effort to move some of the large stock of merchandise. His properties were sold. A. J. McTavish took over the store and J. N. Howard bought the grist mill, house, dam and surrounding property.

"Boss" Pickard lived out his remaining years in the house on the southwest corner of James and Andrew Streets. He died in 1904 at the age of eighty three. It has been suggested that Pickard built the large house on James Street for his son-in-law Nelson Hooper. It is thought that lawyer R. H. Collins acquired the home when Pickard went into bankruptcy. After Collins died in 1900 the house became the property of Samuel Sanders who had previously lived in the Southcott house on the corner of James and Andrew Streets. Mr. Ralph Sweitzer acquired the house about 1960 and renovated it. It is now a nursing home.

James Pickard was a Conservative in politics, and a Methodist in religion. He married twice, first to Elizabeth Walsh and secondly to Mrs. George Harwood. There are no members of James Pickard's family now living in Exeter. For an unlettered, rural

Devonshire boy (it was reported that Pickard could barely read and write) he did very well in the world.

Richard Pickard and George Samwell opened a large store in 1872 on the corner where F. A. May and Sons store is now located. Both of these men had come to Exeter from Devonshire. George Samwell was born in Plymouth in 1832 and had migrated to New York in 1854. He subsequently moved to Exeter to work for James Pickard. Samwell was a Liberal and a Presbyterian. His large house (presently owned by A. Johnson) and grounds on John Street occupied most of the block. Samwell was married twice — first to a Miss Trick and in later years to Mrs. Ann McLeod who outlived George who died in 1906. Ann died in 1918 at the age of ninety one. William Kernick bought the Samwell house after Ann died.

Richard Pickard, a brother of James, was born in 1829 in Ringsash Parish, Devonshire; he migrated to Canada in 1849. He entered the employ of James Pickard upon arriving in Exeter. Richard married Phoebe Elston in 1864. The Elstons had migrated to Exeter from Morchard Bishop, Devonshire in 1855. Miss Elston later commented that Exeter had only fourteen houses in 1855. Richard and Phoebe had six children, Robert E., Richard Jr., Dr. Edward, Herbert G., Jean and Mrs. W. J. Verily. Robert E. Pickard who was born in 1867 was the father of C. V. Pickard and Allen Pickard, two well known Exeter citizens. Richard Pickard was a Liberal and a Methodist; the Times described him as "a friend to the poor and needy".

These two men then opened a large store in 1872. The store eventually found it necessary to employ as many as forty clerks to handle their large trade. "The firm by honourable dealing and good value gained the confidence of the people." The store handled a large stock of dry goods which were under Mr. R. Selden's charge. In addition the other usual general merchandise items were carried including fancy millinery. A new millinery showroom was opened in 1884 under Miss McIntyre's supervision. Some of the attractions in millinery in 1884 included "shell pink otto silk orleans bonnets", "Tuscan Silk", "La Geocanda", "Princess bonnet in Eugenie blue satin". Styles displayed at the opening were Totonville, Belle Cole, Fatigue and Tulette sunshades, West Point, Marcella, Dudette but the soubrette and Bellondere were the centre of the admiring throng. Miss McIntyre the manageress of the Millinery Department also had French silks, kid gloves and many other items.

In the winter of 1889 the partnership was dissolved with Samwell withdrawing but as the Times noted "the business will be carried on in all of its usual magnitude" by Richard Pickard. The store had between thirty and forty employees at the time and they made a presentation to Mr. Samwell. At the "Great Dissolution Sale" there were many bargains such as Ladies' English Walking Jackets at three dollars and twenty-five cents, Ladies' Gloves from five cents. Corsets were twenty cents and up. Men's overcoats were four dollars; twelve pounds of tea sold for one dollar. The business known as R. Pickard and Son carried on until 1898 when Richard died. His son, Robert E., carried on the Robert Pickard Company. Robert had worked in the store since the 1880's. The business was moved from the corner store which was taken over by E. J. Spackman who also took over the store to the south from Hugh Spackman. Spackman operated one store as a dry goods store and the other as a grocery. It was Spackman who put in the archway connecting the two stores and in 1899 he had the sign, which is still visible, painted on the north wall of the store.

Robert Pickard built the store which now houses the Chainway store and carried on business there; he also had stores in Hensall and Dashwood for a short time. Some Pickard prices in 1901 are listed below:

clothes pegs one cent per dozen
baking soda 5 cents for two pounds
tea was twenty cents a pound
Men's tweed suits were thirteen dollars
blankets were ninety-five cents
cotton was five cents per yard
figs were twenty-five cents for six pounds

In 1903 R. E. Pickard sold the business to Bennett and Snell. It soon after became Snell and Rowe. The Times hoped "for the fruition of their most sanguine expectations." Robert Pickard then migrated west to Frobisher, Saskatchewan with his wife, the former Elizabeth Verity and family. He remained there until 1925. Robert died in the family house on John Street in 1934 and a scant four days later his wife died. The name Pickard then was important on Main Street from James' arrival in 1852 for the next fifty years. C. V. Pickard continued to keep the Pickard name on Main Street from the 1930's to the early 1960's.

Another native of Morchard Bishop, Devon was William Drew who reached London, Ontario in 1848. There cholera claimed the lives of his father, mother and two sisters. William and four other members of the family walked up the London Road to Exeter in 1854. Drew, a carpenter, built many of the early frame houses in the village; he also built the Commercial Hotel about 1860 and operated it for twelve years after which he sold the hotel to John Hawkshaw. Drew's brother, Eldred, operated a cabinet making shop; Eldred left Exeter for California. Drew also developed a furniture and undertaking business which was later sold by John Drew to R. N. Rowe who operated the business for many years before it was taken over by R. Dinney. It is reported that Drew suggested the name "The Times" to John White when he opened the newspaper office in 1873. Drew was twice married first to Miss Bawden and then to Mary Holman. Drew died at the age of eighty-six in 1914.

"The Carling store was one of the real pioneer cracker barrel stores with a large wood stove around which the problems of the day were thoroughly discussed." It was noted also that "The Carling store was the centre of the Tory party" in Exeter. The original Carling store was a frame structure built in 1847 by Isaac Carling. Isaac later built a brick block, where Beavers Hardware was located, to house his general store and it was this store being described in the quotation above. The original store building was left standing as a warehouse until the Dickson and Carling building, which is now the Bell and Laughton building was erected.

Isaac Carling sold dry goods, groceries, wines, liquors, and other general merchandise. One of the Carlings' advertisements in 1876 revealed Carling's political interests. The advertisement noted that:

> "The National Policy having
> triumphed at the polls
> Isaac Carling is prepared to give
> his customers the benefits
> that will accrue from its adoption."

The business was sold in 1912 by W. J. Carling, the last Carling to own the store, after sixty five years of operation under the Carling name. The new owner was B. Bedford of Brighton. W. J. Carling and his family moved to Brighton. In later years the store became a Chinese Cafe and later Beavers Hardware.

Another Main Street building which has been a landmark on the street for one hundred years is the building presently occupied by Gould and Jory. The building was built in the 1860's by C. Eacrett whose harness shop occupied the south part of the building. In the north part of the building was Ranton Brothers general store. A century or more ago there were three frame stores immediately north of Rantons, where the Public Utilities building now stands. These stores were John McInnis' flour and feed store which was later George Hyndman's store, Dan Dyer's printing and novelty shop, and Miss Crocker's millinery. South of Ranton was, of course, Eacrett's then B. S. O'Neil's Bank where the law office is now, above the bank was the dental office of Dr. Kinsman. South of O'Neil's bank was a hardware, Dr. Browning's Dominion Medical Laboratory and J. P. Clarke.

In the late 1880's or 1890's Rantons was taken over by J. A. Stewart. He called the store "The Big Bankrupt Store" and he specialized in buying up the stock of bankrupt businesses. One of his advertisements said that a lady had been found wandering around blind on Main Street, her blindness having been induced by the very low prices of white wool blankets at the Big Bankrupt Store the prices had "knocked her silly". Stewart expanded the store into the south section. He sold groceries, dry goods, boots, shoes and other goods. In the 1890's he had boys' oxfords for eighty-seven cents, ladies' lace boots for one dollar and seventeen cents and one dollar and twenty-seven cents. Stewart lived a block from the store on the south east corner of John and Andrew Street. He died in 1950 at the age of ninety. Two of the Stewarts' clerks in the early years of this century were T. G. and H. O. Southcott. In those years Southcott's wages were one dollar and fifty cents a week. After working at other jobs the Southcott brothers purchased in 1919 the dry goods business of B. W. F. Beavers which was then situated in the store now occupied by Lindenfields. In 1926 the Southcotts purchased J. A. Stewart's store and operated the business until the early 1950's when it was acquired by Messrs. Gould and Jory.

Southcotts have been represented on the Main Street of Exeter since the late 1850's when John Southcott opened a grocery store. Charles Southcott had a tailor shop; both John and Charles also had various other types of businesses in the 1860's and 1870's. William Southcott built the block at the corner of John and Main Street but later he had financial troubles and other difficulties. William's wife, Christy Ann, a daughter of Thomas Oke, operated a dress making establishment with eighteen employees. Christy Ann was the mother of H. O. and T. O. mentioned above and the mother of J. M. Southcott who as we have noted owned the newspaper. The paper as we also noted is still operated by the Southcotts. Charles Southcott and his son George were the first Southcotts to become involved with the Grand Bend property known as Southcott Pines. So for nearly one hundred and twenty-five years Southcotts have been associated with the business activities of Exeter.

The name "Jones and May" was associated with Exeter's Main Street for many decades. It was noted in previous pages how J. G. Jones began to do business in Exeter. In 1908 William May joined Jones and a few years later Fred A. May joined the firm. Jones' wife was Lavina May and the two Mays were her nephews. When Hubert Jones took over in 1927 he and the Mays continued the extensive dry goods and grocery business. Jones and May were one of the first stores in Exeter to install a telephone, the number was thirty-two until dials were installed. The dry goods business is carried on by W. May and the grocery business by H. Holtzmann.

C. B. Snell was one of Exeter's leading entrepreneurs from the 1890's to 1929 when he died. Snell was Reeve at the time of his death, he was seventy-seven years old. Charles B. Snell and his brother George operated a butcher business in the 1890's; they expanded the meat business and established a Pork Packing Plant in the old Pickard building on James Street. He was associated with Tremaine and Zniffle in establishing the steam generating plant which produced electricity for Exeter for about twenty years.

Snell built many houses in Exeter including the old Creech house on the corner of John and Andrew Streets where he lived himself for some years. He erected other houses on Andrew Street in the vicinity of Exeter South's first school. Snell demolished this school building and erected on the school site the house occupied for some years by Luther Penhale. Snell also erected the two houses immediately north of the Penhale house. Snell tore down the old Digory Braund house in Francistown and built several houses from the material including one or two on John Street.

C. B. Snell built the garage now known as Snell Bros. Ltd. In order to build this garage it was necessary to construct part of it over an open creek which ran through Exeter at that time. Snell persuaded Council in the 1920's to enclose the open creek in a large tile along the north side of Anne Street. After this had been done Snell built the four red brick houses along the street. Snell purchased the old Commercial Hotel about 1916 and converted it to stores and apartments.

Snell attempted to provide Exeter with a hospital when he purchased the old James Pickard house on Main Street; the house was just south of the garage he had built. He then converted the house to a hospital; the project was not, however, successful.

As might be expected Snell owned one of the first cars in Exeter. He was an avid lawn bowler and again as perhaps might be expected in those days he was a leading member of the James Street Methodist Church.

For many years one of Exeter's leading Main Street figures was B. W. F. Beavers. Before noting Beavers' business activities it is worth mentioning one or two facts about his family background. The Beavers emigrated from Yorkshire, to be specific from Hull, Yorkshire in 1846. They sailed on the immigrant ship "Stentor" and the voyage to Quebec took three months. The family, William Beavers and his wife Sarah (Clarkson) and their children first went to Toronto and then made the rough journey to Blanshard Township and took up Lot sixteen, Concession four. William could not stand the rigors of pioneer life and died in 1849 at the age of forty-one leaving his wife Sarah who was forty two years old and their nine children named Mary, Joseph, Benjamin, William, John, Harriet, Hannah, George and Samuel. Sarah proved to be tougher stuff than her husband because after burying him in the cemetery where the first log Methodist Church was built on the Mitchell road she proceeded to raise her family: she lived to be ninety years old passing away in 1897.

William Jr., the third son of the pioneer couple married Louisa Senn. Louisa's family history contains the following anecdote: Mrs. Senn's father's mother, that is, Louisa's great grandmother, was stolen by Indians when she was five years old and living with her family in Pennsylvania in the early 1700's. The girl was carried away by the Indians who also took her younger brother and an aunt. The Indians killed the aunt and the boy but the little girl was spared and became a favorite of the chief. She was finally ransomed at the age of twelve by a German with whom she stayed until she was twenty at which time she married Joseph Senn, a Swiss silk weaver.

William and Louisa stayed in Blanshard and raised a family including Benjamin W. F. Beavers who eventually settled in Exeter marrying Michael Eacrett's daughter. Beavers operated stores in various locations and engaged in various types of retail trade during his business life to 1946 when his son Reg took over the hardware store. B. W. F. Beavers was a leader among businessmen's groups such as the Chamber of Commerce but he is probably best remembered for his contribution to the municipal affairs of the community. The chapter on municipal affairs deals further with B. W. F. Beavers.

It is, of course, not possible to deal extensively with every business on Main Street but it is worth mentioning some of the others. Farmer Bros. was a well known name on Exeter's Main Street for a number of years. The Star Grocery was started by Thomas Farmer in the 1870's on the corner of Huron and Main Streets and later moved to the site now occupied by the shoe store north of the Town Clerk's office. The business was taken over by John and Richard Farmer and expanded to include liquor and wines. Eventually the liquor and grocery business was separated in two stores with the grocery store being where the shoe store is now located and the liquor store in a building immediately to the south. This building which housed the liquor store had been Exeter's first Bible Christian Church. Many stories are told of the tricks played on old John Farmer in this liquor store. In 1908 J. G. Jones purchased Farmer's grocery store and installed a seed mill in the building. About the same time Alfred Walters purchased the liquor store which he converted to a shoemaking establishment. Walters had come to the Devon settlement south of Exeter from Devonshire. He operated the hotel at Devon for a time before coming to Exeter as a shoemaker. Alf Walters' shoestore was a favorite haunt of the top checker players of the village. Apparently the occasional drop was also available in the shop.

J. G. Jones bought the old building, however, in 1915 and moved it to the rear of his store where it became a poultry barn and later a warehouse. At least part of the building still stands behind the A. and H. Grocery store and is still used as a storage building. First a church, then a grocery store, and a liquor store, a shoe store, a chicken barn and now a warehouse, the old building has served the town in many ways providing "spiritual" solace in several ways.

Other stores sold liquor and wines in Exeter in addition to Farmer Bros. We mentioned that Isaac Carling's store sold liquor. G. A. Mace sold groceries and liquors for over twenty years until 1887 when the business was purchased by J. W. Broderick. F. J. Knight sold groceries and liquors in the 1890's and early 1900's. Knight's store was on the corner where Darlings store is now located. Samuel Horney sold groceries and liquors and it is worth noting that his daughter Mabel became superintendent of nurses at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. She was awarded an Order of the British Empire.

There have been many, many other stores selling groceries, meats and general merchandise in addition to the large stores which we have mentioned. The following come to mind: G. A. Hyndman, Groceries and Ice Cream Parlor "The coolest and best appointed in town"; Wood and Fuke, Butchers; J. F. Clarke, General Merchant; Trick and Currelly in Francistown, Groceries. The Currelly of this business was the father of Charles Currelly who was born in 1876 and who became a world renowned archeologist and first curator of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. Currelly in his autobiography comments on the economic life of Exeter in the 1880's as follows:

> Exeter at that time was a village of about two thousand, a mile and a quarter long with two or three streets on each side of its Main Street.
>
> The village was extremely pretty, owing to its tidiness and the flowers and vegetables growing everywhere. . . . Economically the town was free from misery. The only real tragedy was typhoid fever. I can remember a hundred and twenty-five cases in a single autumn.
>
> As I left at an early age, I was afraid that I might have idealized this life, but I consulted a man who had left at a mature age and he assured me that I had not done so. If a man were out of work for a few days in the summer time, he was rather glad as it gave him a chance to do more in his garden. In the winter he could get more wood cut up. A number of families kept a cow, which ran the roads, and milk products were plentiful. The comfort of the population was largely due to the great economy; there was no waste, and food was ridiculously cheap by modern standards. The best beef was ten cents a pound, the poorest about four cents. Chickens were five cents a pound; ducks six cents; and turkeys seven cents. Bread was five cents

> for a large loaf, and milk was five cents a quart. Most of the vegetables were home grown. The farmers stripped the hides from their beasts, our tanner tanned them, and excellent shoemakers made the leather into long boots, which came nearly to the knees, for the farmers. The boots had brilliant red or green pieces of leather set in the front. Ordinary boots and occasionally what were called low shoes were made for the villagers. The farmers' wool was woven into blankets and the woollen mill was capable of weaving quite complicated designs. We manufactured our own wooden pumps, wagons, sleighs and buggies, and nearly all of our furniture. We had one fair-sized factory, the Verity Plow Company. The main imports were groceries and cloth. Wages were steady at a dollar a day. Apprentices started at three dollars a week, or, if they boarded in, as they usually did, it was fifty dollars for the first year, seventy-five for the second, and a hundred for the third. After that they became journeymen. For some reason a large number of the village boys became tailors. Most of the work was done on a friendly basis by people who had gone to school together, grown up together, and called one another by their Christian names.
>
> During this period of my life I spent much of my free time watching men at work, until I knew a good deal about the different trades that were practised in the village: blacksmithing, woodworking, stone cutting, and stone polishing. Later I had to work with archaeologists who knew nothing about these basic kinds of work, and then found what a great advantage I had in the study of early craftsmanship, as the village trades were much the same trades that one met in examining ancient communities.

We have been noting the food stores. We can also add to the list Stanley and Jermyn, J. Crannican—"The People's Grocery Store"; Henry Bierling's store in Exeter North. J. T. Manning meats occupied the original Bierling store for a time. Louis Day's Butcher Shop operated until 1900. After that Louis operated a dairy herd, produced vegetables from his market gardens and otherwise helped supply Exeter's food requirements. Louis had come from Amberly in Gloucestershire to London and thence to Exeter in the 1890's to manage Snell's Packing Plant. Louis Sr. died in 1947 at the age of eighty-eight. His son Louis has been a well known figure in Exeter for years, being best remembered perhaps by the many children whom he befriended and gave rides to on his wagon. Louis Day Jr. was one of the last to keep horses to work land within the town limits and was the last to keep milk cows within the town limits. His barn until recently stood behind the post office as a reminder of the days when many of Exeter's stores and houses had barns at the rear of the property. These barns provided housing for the cows, horses, pigs and poultry which were kept by a majority of the towns people in the past.

Hooper and Bissett's Grocery was one door south of Samwell and Pickards. R. E. Spicer's Grocery was in the Southcott block.

We mentioned the Farmers' Cash Market on the Town Hall grounds. There was Bolton Grocery in the 1930's. Frank Coates, Alice Sanders, Irwin Ford, H. C. Rivers are other names to add to the list of food merchants.

Every type of store could be found on the Main Street of Exeter. Common to most small Ontario towns like Exeter was the undertaking trade usually associated with the furniture business. One of the early undertaking firms was that of Charles and Samuel Gidley whose furniture business and undertaking rooms were located in the Oddfellows Block. We have mentioned the details of the Gidley family in an early section. Samuel Gidley lived in the Gidley house on William Street until 1904 when he sold it to Valentine Mitchell and moved to Duluth, Minnesota. Charles remained in Exeter.

John Drew "undertaker" could be found next door to Molsons Bank in the store now occupied by Dinneys. He also had other locations. Drew's advertisements advised the people of Exeter and area that he had

> "Coffins of all sizes kept on
> hand and made to order
> shrouds and burial robes made
> of the best material. Funerals
> attended to with promptness.

The best hearse in the County furnished for five dollars."

John Drew further advised that he used the "techniques of the Egyptian embalmers" to prevent the "discoloring of corpses and offensive odours". Drew sold his business in 1887 after, perhaps, thirty years in the trade to Robert N. Rowe and Walter Andrew.

R. N. Rowe was the son of Thomas Rowe who had come from St. Kew, Cornwall, to Stephen Township in 1853. Thomas had twelve children. One of them, Robert N., was one of Exeter's well known Main Street figures for over fifty years. When he and Andrew took over Drew's business in 1887 he began an undertaking career that lasted for fifty years. It is said that he buried over two thousand people. He saw the disappearance of the horse-drawn, high black hearse with the black plumes and black nets covering the horses and the appearance of the motor vehicle to replace the horses. He also saw the end of the $25 funeral. Rowe died in 1952. The business is now operated by R. Dinney.

Other undertakers included John Brown whose furniture and undertaking rooms were "opposite Kemp's Tobacco Store" on the corner of Main and Gidley. James Beverly's "Furniture Emporium" was in the Oddfellow's Block in the early 1900's; W. C. Huston was advertised as "the practical embalmer". There were the firms of Popplestone and Gardiner, Hopper and Hockey as well

Hardware stores included Hugh Spackman's, W. J. Bassett, who represented the Deering Harvesting Company, T. Hawkins and Son (now operated by G. Fisher), O'Bryne and Company, W. H. Moncur and J. N. Howard. W. J. Heaman opened a hardware store in the early 1900's in the store now known as Gunns. Heaman served on Exeter's Council for ten years during which time he was Reeve for two years. He was Lieutenant in F. Company, 33rd Huron Militia regiment and eventually became Lieutenant-Colonel of the Huron Battalion (Militia). During the first World War he served first as a Captain and then as a Major in Huron's one hundred and sixty-first. Heaman was a liberal in politics. The Heaman home was on John Street, where K. Johns lives now. Heaman sold out to Lindenfield and Traquair and moved to London; he served several terms as mayor of that city. A small note of interest mentioned by J. M. Southcott was that Fred Heaman the "Colonel's son", owned the first radio in Exeter and J. M. Southcott mentioned hearing a piano recital from Detroit in 1922 over Heaman's radio.

Hardware stores sold all types of hardware, did tinsmithing, sold coal oil and fuels. An item in the Times of March eighth, 1877 mentions that "coal oil has come down considerably this last week on account of the ring formed for the purpose of keeping the price up, being broken" (the price had come down from fifty cents to twenty five cents for an amount not mentioned in the item).

In addition to the liquor stores which supplied spiritous drink Exeter had several drug stores to help supply the wants of the villagers. The drug stores sold liquor from time to time under license and only to people with prescriptions from a doctor. A good many of the patent medicines sold also consisted of healthy portions of alcohol or drugs such as laudanum (a mixture of alcohol and opium). The druggists dispensed medicines such as Merchants Gargling Oil (a liniment for man and beast), Ayer's Sarsparilla, Baxter's Mandrake Bitters, St. Leon's Mineral Water, an Elixer Vita for Dyspepsia and Piles, Freemans Worm Powders, Paines Celery Compound and countless other cures for Nervous Prostration, Female Weakness, Paralysis, Hot Flashes, St. Vitus Dance, Broken Constitution, Dyspepsia, Constipation, Frightful dreams, Scrofula, Consumption, Tenderness in the Stomach, Boils, Carbuncles, summer complaint, pains anywhere and an endless list of other ailments.

Also available were cures for male problems such as "seminal weakness" or spermatorrhea induced by self abuse, involuntary emissions, impotency, impediments of Marriage, etc." Various cures for these problems were advertised by a Dr. Culverwell, by "a missionary just returned from South America", by Drs. Kennedy and

Kergan of Detroit. Testimonials appeared from men who "suffered untold agonies", because of "sinful habits in youth". They testified to cures for syphilis, emissions, varicocele, and impotency.

Burdock Blood Bitters "cured scrofulous constitutions and Hereditary Taints in the System". Halloway's Pills fixed "Debilitated Constitutions". "Keep your stomach clean and your bowels regular" Dr. Carsons Bitters will do it. Advertisements for various medicines are reproduced on the following pages.

The drug stores dispensing these and other medicines in Exeter included the Dominion Medical Laboratory owned by Dr. Browning who "dispenseth knowledge in no limited degree". Brownings Drug Store was open until very recently and was the oldest business establishment in Exeter. More will be said about Dr. Browning below. Grieves Drug Store (next to Seniors), Van Dusens Drugs, and H. Noseworthy who sold drugs and sewing machines one door west of the Commercial Hotel were others. Dr. Lutz sold to W. S. Cole in 1906 after decades of practice in Exeter, then moved to Gananoque where he died in 1913. In 1904 William Howey bought D. Hartleib's repair shop and set up his son in the drug business. W. Howey sold out in 1935 to a Mr. Walker who sold to Robertson in 1940 who in turn sold to W. Huntley who presently owns the store.

Exeter has had various bakers and confectioners including A. Skinner, J. Logg who in 1874 advertised his "Ice Cream Saloon" with ice cream and temperance drinks, Joseph Lindsay, George Northmore who operated the Exeter Bakery, Bell's Bakery, E. A. Fullick's Ice Cream Parlour, Bagshaw, W. E. Middleton, Wm. Statham, J. T. O'Brien, and R. Luxton. The last five men operated the bakeshop and restaurant now operated as Spicers. This shop has been there since before the turn of the century and the barns behind this shop burned down in one of Exeter's most spectacular fires.

A listing of other stores is provided below but it is no way intended to be complete. The names are mentioned only to illustrate the variety of stores found. There were stores selling boots, shoes and harnesses of which Eacrett's and Walker's has been mentioned. Others included William Fanson who built "Fanson's Block" in the 1860's just north of the Central Hotel. Fanson later moved to Winnipeg. This business block was later owned by A. J. McDonnell and Judge Dickson. Other harness shops will be dealt with in the chapter on horses.

W. Johns was a tailor whose weekly advertisement said "Get your pants down" at W. Johns. McClelland Brothers in Drew's Block sold clothing. J. G. Smallacombe was a tailor. John Back, flour and feed, operated the Exeter Seed Store north of Carling's in the 1870's he advertised "Imports direct from the fountainhead —

England". A. E. Moore, Will Folland, W. Trott leather; M. M. Rosebrugh, books, vases "fancy boxes"; S. E. Jones, clocks and watches; G. Sanders, tobacco, books etc.; Miss Garlick, millinery; Kemp's tobacco store featuring Tin Tac Sweet Chewing Tobacco; George Kemp was also the agent for steamship tickets; C. Southcott and Sons, clothiers and tailors; Sinclair Tait, toys and fancy goods; J. Swallow, pumps, in the Southcott block; A. Lake, insurance and land agent in Fanson's Block; R. H. Sweet, boots and shoes. These names were found along Exeter's Main Street. Others can be added. William Grigg came to Exeter from Plymouth in Devon in 1855. In the early 1860's he opened a book and stationery store where MacMillan's is now. He had been a tailor but decided to try a new field. He died in 1908 and his son John carried on the business for years. Grigg's was the chief source of school supplies and every September the store was packed with eager youngsters buying their school books, pencils and paper. B. Swenerton handled seed grain, quick lime, salt and coal near the station. Perkins and Martin had a music store; C. Eacrett carried boots, shoes and bicycles. R. Hicks was a watchmaker and marriage licence issuer; John Treble sold boots and shoes (Later R. Sweet's); Grieves Tailor Shop was one door north of Dr. Lutz and was sold to W. W. Toman in 1903 and to McKnight and Walper years later, and is now George Vriese's store. Incidentally some men's wear prices in 1902 were coats for seven dollars and seventy five cents, pants for one dollar and fifty cents, boy's suits sold for two dollars and handkerchiefs were eight for twenty five cents. T. Fitton was Exeter's first optician and jeweller; he had come to Exeter in 1867, built a number of houses on Main Street south of the river and opened his store in the Fanson Block; his son Saxon, who was the first child born in the incorporated village of Exeter took over the business from his father who died in 1925 at the age of eighty-eight. When Saxon died in 1937 the business became Taylor's Jewellery store and is now Campbells.

The Opera House Block housed various businesses including furniture and undertaking businesses. The Opera House is more fully treated in a later chapter. In the 1930's it contained a Massey Harris agency and later an automobile supply store. Willis Powell who died in 1957 at the age of seventy nine, operated Powell's Bazaar, a variety store; he also owned the Purity Manufacturing Company whose chief product was Nameless Cold Remedy. Levitt's Fair, a variety store was operated by W. Levitt for some years. Levitt also bought the Grand Bend Park, a fifty acre area from John Spackman in 190[illegible]. Levitt sold the variety store in 1902 to a Mr. Talbot who changed the name to Talbot's Bazaar.

In more recent years store names such as Severn's shoe repair,

The Exeter radio shop, Snell and Boyle, The Institute of Musical Progress (Mrs. H. Gambrill), John C. Vidt, [illegible], Ralph Bailey florist (on the former William Snell property), Lawson and Trick, jewellers come to mind. One also recalls Sam Lee's Chinese Laundry where Rowe's Electric is now located. Sam did shirts for ten cents, handkerchiefs for two cents. There was Wong's Cafe where Beavers Hardware Store is now. Another member of Exeter's Chinese business community was Fong Kwong's Laundry and Quick Lunch opposite the Dome Theatre and rink in the 1920's. Apparently these Chinese had a tough time in Exeter facing the jokes and teasing of the younger and not so young population. Ben Makins Steam Laundry and Steam Bath was north of the bowling green and later just south of the green; the steam baths were frequented by the hockey players after games. C. T. Brooks operated the express office where N. Hockey's Barber Shop was later located and where Norm Martin's Optometrist office is now; a man named Gillespie drew the freight from the office.

The photographic record of Exeter and its families was made largely by the Senior family although in the 1880's W. T. Johns advertised his 'Sunbeam Art Gallery' in Exeter North. It was however the Seniors who did most of the photography in the area. Charles Senior started in July 1867 with tin type photographs; his first photo studio was in the old Carling store where the Bell and Laughton building is now. Senior then purchased the old Royal Hotel building. His son Joseph Senior took over the business and in 1906 he acquired the building which now houses the poolroom and Rether's Restaurant. Joseph Senior practiced his photographic trade until 1943. Senior taught Curt Rollins, a son of Dr. Rollins, photography and Rollins became a photographer for the Cleveland News. Joseph Senior was village clerk for several decades as well. In 1939 he sold the north part of his building to Nelson Statton who opened a poolroom there. Statton had previously, in 1937, opened a poolroom across the street. This poolroom was the first in Exeter and created a terrible stir; the good villagers were sure that the fires of hell would rage and burn in Exeter now that there was a poolroom. This contentious issue will be commented upon elsewhere. In 1943 Jim Grieve purchased the south part of the Senior building and opened the restaurant which is now Rether's. Joseph Senior died in 1955 at the age of ninety. A few of his old pictures still survive although the old metal plates were melted for scrap during World War One and many of his glass negatives were used for windows in Bailey's greenhouse.

Exeter's financial affairs have been handled over the years by a number of banks. The first bank to open in Exeter was probably the Exchange Bank of Canada which was established in Exeter in the early 1870's W A Hastings was the first manager The Exchange Bank failed in 1882 In 1874 when Exeter had eight hundred and fifty-four people Molson's Bank opened a branch in the village. The branch was located in Drew's building at the corner of Main and Huron The first manager was Edward Stinthy who remained until 1877 he was succeeded by H E Brewer who served until 1883 and was followed by A A C Denovan The next manager was R H Archer and shortly after him in 1885 came clearly the most colorful man ever to manage a bank in Exeter and one of the most colorful characters ever to live in Exeter this fellow was Nicholas Dyer Hurdon who was born in Bideford, Devonshire and who entered the banking field with the National Bank of England, in Barnstaple, North Devon in 1862 He served six years in London and then emigrated to Montreal where he entered Molson's Bank He was posted to Exeter as manager in 1885 During his tenure as manager the bank moved to a new building in 1901 This building is now the P U C office In order to erect it there the bank purchased the property owned by a Mr Smale for three thousand dollars, the three frame stores previously mentioned were demolished. The new building cost ten thousand dollars to build but was centrally located and served the Bank until 1943 N Dyer Hurdon continued as manager until December 31 1914 when he retired after fifty two years in banking Unfortunately he did not live long thereafter passing away on August twenty-fifth nineteen nineteen Dyer Hurdon was a prominent leader in the affairs of Exeter's societies lodges churches athletics, and patriotic celebrations for thirty four years More will be said about him in other chapters

N Dyer Hurdon was followed by W D Clarke who managed the bank until 1919 T S Woods took over in 1919 and was manager when Molsons amalgamated with the Bank of Montreal on the twenty ninth of October 1929 Molsons was the last of Canada's family banks having been founded in 1853 Woods remained as the manager of what is now the Bank of Montreal in Exeter until 1935 when he was succeeded by W H Morse who served until 1940 W J Floyd J F Hendry C E Shaw and C Smith were the last four managers

Exeter had only one private bank in its history that was B S O'Neill's bank which was established in 1877 in offices now occupied by the Raymond law office This bank operated until about 1903 or 1904 when it was bought by the Sovereign Bank Mr O'Neill lived in the large house on the south west corner of James and Albert Street occupied in recent years by the Farrows.

In July 1902 the Sovereign Bank opened a branch in Exeter in the building now occupied by Russells The manager was Mr F E Karn In 1903 the Sovereign Bank bought the McArthur and Com

pany bank in Hensall and the Snell and Company banks in Dashwood and Zurich. The Sovereign Bank was taken over in 1909 by the Bank of Commerce.

The Commerce Bank operated in the same office as the Sovereign Bank for three or four years until a new bank building was erected on property purchased from John Treble. Mr. Treble had operated a business which produced and sold boots, shoes and harness. He had been on the site for many years. Treble was born in 1837 and died in 1901, and was one of Exeter's early businessmen. The new bank was opened in 1912. This is the building where the Bank of Montreal is now located because in 1943 the Bank of Commerce left Exeter and the Bank of Montreal took over the building. For about ten years Exeter had only one bank. This was the first time since the 1880's that Exeter had only one bank. The Bank of Nova Scotia opened a branch in the early 1950's.

The Post Office was an important institution on the Main Streets of Ontario's small towns. Exeter became a post village in 1855 with the first postmaster being William Sanders. We mentioned that a number of Sanders families came to Exeter; they all came from Devonshire and probably were somehow related. Francistown was designated a post village about the same time. John McDonnell was the first postmaster in Francistown. The Francistown post office was probably in McDonnell's Tavern. The first Exeter post office was in Sanders' house which stood on Main Street just north of the present location of Sanders' grocery store which was in a building erected by William Sanders in the 1860's. Sanders moved the post office to this building in the 1860's.

By the early 1850's, the people of the area were becoming impatient with the poor postal service. As we noted the post office was not established until 1855 and in 1852 people such as McLeod complained that "One great grievance subsists in the two petty post offices of this tract on London Road, viz: though a person do deliver a letter to the courier say here, he the postman delivers the same in the next post office where it must remain until his next trip."

One of the two post offices mentioned by McLeod was the Hay post office located about two miles north of Exeter. "It was opened October 6, 1842 with Joseph Hardy as the first postmaster. It was the only post office for a large district, so large, indeed, that others besides Mr. McLeod had reason to complain as the following incident will prove. A certain Mrs. Fisher who lived near Elimville in Usborne Township, seven miles away from Exeter walked into the village one summer day carrying ten dozen eggs for which the merchants allowed her five cents a dozen. The amount received, fifty cents, was so disappointingly small that she exclaimed:

"I'll not sell any more eggs at that price.

"What will you do with them?" asked the merchant.

"We'll eat them," was her reply.

But her troubles were not over for she had to walk two miles farther north to Hay post office for the mail. Thence home, a long nine miles more, thus making what would be called today an almost incredible tramp of eighteen miles.

From 1855 to 1875 the mail was carried by stage. The first mail carrier was John Rattenbury who ran the mail stage from Goderich to London and back; a round trip on this run required a week. Ted Crawley and William Brooks were the last mail carriers on the London Road. Brooks was killed in a nasty stagecoach accident which is described in the chapter on transportation. With the coming of the railway in late 1875 the services of the mail stages were no longer needed, at least for the towns on the railway. Stages still had to be used to carry mail and passengers from Exeter to Dashwood, Grand Bend, St Marys and other communities not reached by rail from Exeter. The stage services to these places continued until well after the turn of the century and the introduction of motor vehicles.

William Sanders served as post master until 1873 although his son had been named deputy postmaster for some years before 1873 as William's health was poor. Sanders' son also operated the telegraph when it came to Exeter in 1876. Miss Mary Sanders operated the telegraph service in the old Sanders house on Main Street until about 1928.

1873 was an election year and the Reform Party under Alexander Mackenzie defeated MacDonald and the Tories. As was common at that time, the postmasters were often changed when the government changed and in Exeter "A dyed in the wool Grit," David Johns, a hardware merchant and tinsmith who had been in Exeter for about twelve years, was appointed postmaster. It was said that even though he was a Grit, Johns was loved by the Tories as well, so the appointment was not unpopular. Johns moved the post office from Sanders' building to his frame building on the north corner of James and Main. Shortly after this move he transferred the post office to a frame building located somewhere in the vicinity of the present post office. Then in 1878 Johns erected a two story brick building across the road from the Royal Hotel. This building is now occupied by Lindenfields. Johns also erected the house now the Hopper Hockey Funeral home about the same time. He moved the post office to the south store and a store operated in the north part of the building. It is worth noting that Johns' salary in 1893 was eight hundred and sixty five dollars per annum. Johns died in 1898 "after an illness of several years' duration, but which took a more serious turn … all that was mortal of postmaster Johns died on Monday morning … he was a man of sterling qualities, his word being as good as his bond"). Johns was a Methodist and a prime mover in the construction of the Main Street Church.

Edward Christie another Liberal succeeded Johns as postmaster in 1898. Christie had been a cabinet maker, a hotel owner, operating the old Royal Hotel, he had owned a livery stable and had dealt in horses. Christie's wife was a Carling. The post office revenue, incidentally, in 1898 was $2442.60; in addition $1524 worth of money orders were issued. The post office remained during Christie's time in the same location as it had been. Christie died in 1917 at the age of seventy-four; his son E. J. Christie, while never officially designated, acted as post master until 1917 when W. J. Russell, a returned veteran who had lost an arm at Ypres was appointed. The local Conservative organization had recommended W. J. Carling for the office but the government chose the war veteran Russell instead. Russell died in 1921 and was succeeded by Milton W. Pfaff. Pfaff was postmaster for about thirty years and was succeeded by Harvey Pfaff the present office holder and sixth postmaster in Exeter.

The site of the present post office was purchased in 1914. At that time there were three buildings on the site, W. G. Beer's Harness shop, J. Davis' feed store, and an old building that had been a blacksmith shop and then owned by Dr. Roulston. These buildings were torn down. Beer moved to the store where Russell's is now. An open space between the Bank of Commerce and Heaman's Hardware was then available for the new post office. The open space remained for sixteen years — until 1930, most of the time it was an eyesore in the centre of Exeter's Main Street although

Site of the Post Office

euphemistically designated Federal Park and occasionally beautified by the Horticultural Society.

The government in 1930 finally erected a new post office. It was officially opened on June 12, 1930, Milton Pfaff the postmaster, Miss Caroline Davis and Miss Florence West were the staff members. The building was erected by Beaver Bros. of Crediton, with Traquair and Lindenfield doing the painting and tinsmithing. The building cost $31,000.

The Francistown post office still exists and is now designated as Hay post office.

This outline of Exeter's business and commercial activity could not be complete without mention being made of the professions. The medical profession has been well represented in Exeter over the years. It is difficult to be sure which doctors were practicing at the same time in the village but it would appear that Exeter had between seven and ten doctors in the late 1870's and 1880's and 1890's. These would have been Doctors Hyndman, Browning, Irving, Merdan, Moore, Cowan, Lutz, and Rollins. Ames and Dr. Hutchinson. This group of doctors were the early medical practitioners in Exeter. At least seven of them practiced simultaneously; when one adds the doctors in each of the small villages around Exeter it is apparent that the number of doctors was much larger than than it is at present in South Huron.

The first area doctor was John Hyndman M.C.P.S. whose office was first located next door to Isaac Carling's store. Hyndman as we mentioned previously was a son of Sheriff Hyndman, Huron's first Sheriff and early settler. He first practiced in the Devon Settlement in 1851 moving to Exeter five or six years later. About 1860 Dr. Hyndman built the house on the west corner of Huron and Albert Streets. It is reported that Hyndman's first patient in the area was Philip Andrew who had broken his leg in the bush. Hyndman gave him medical attention in one of the inns on the London Road, south of Exeter. Hyndman was evidently just arriving on the stage when Andrew was brought in. Dr. Hyndman died in 1899. His obituary in the Times reads in part as follows:

> "The death of Dr. Hyndman removes one, who for many years has gone in and out among us and carried the white flower of a stainless life. Always a great man, always zealous for the high standard of his profession his patients became his devoted friends and had for him a love and respect that is all too rare among the practitioners of our day. No man whatever his calling will be more missed than the white-haired courteous gentleman whose body racked often with pain continued at his post to the last. ... Dr. Hyndman was a link in the history of the County of Huron, of which but little of the chain remains."

> May the turf rest lightly on the kind heart that lies still below . . . A most appropriate and touching service (was) conducted in the Trivitt Memorial Church . . . The pallbearers were David Mill, T. B. Carling, R. Pickard, Thom. Cam, B. S. O'Neill and L. Hardy."

Dr. Hyndman's practice was assumed by his son Dr. Hugh K. Hyndman. Hugh was born in the family house on Huron Street on October 14, 1863; he graduated in medicine from the University of Western Ontario in 1886. Hugh Hyndman found time from a busy practice to cultivate the finer things in life; he was interested in the arts, grew flowers, was a keen horseman. Margaret Strang in an essay on Dr. Hyndman noted that he kept a stable of fine horses but that his practice was so wide "that there were times when he did not have a fresh horse in his stable with which to answer a country call!" Hyndman also raised Airdales as well. He was an Anglican and a Conservative. He had some business interests, one of them being the telephone. He and his brother George started the telephone system which they later sold to the Fraynes and which was still operated by that family until very recently. In connection with this telephone system Margaret Strang makes the following remarks: "When the telephone came into general use the doctor was quick to see its possibilities in a rural community. But nobody knew anything about telephones in that district — who was going to build the lines and keep them in shape? He would do it himself — and he did. The Hyndman Telephone Line, with ramifications over many miles of adjacent townships, has been an institution in the district for twenty years. He ordered the phones, poles and equipment to be shipped in, hired the men to do the work, financed the building, set his own rental rates, arranged an exchange with the Bell Telephone Company, and his own brother kept the books in the doctor's office.

Dr. Hyndman did his best to keep up to date on new treatments and equipment in the field of medicine. "New treatments and new equipment came into vogue, and the doctor's library and equipment swelled accordingly, for he kept up with them all, though how and when he managed to read so widely only he knew. When he could go so far in diagnosis, but not far enough without the x-ray, he installed a small high frequency machine and employed an office nurse to use the equipment. He did not only his own work but also a great deal for the local dentists.

During the same year he opened the rooms above his office as a small private hospital. That was the year of the first influenza epidemic, and the new small hospital, small as it was, proved an inestimable boom to the stricken community. So highly was it commended that even after the epidemic passed it was kept on as a permanent affair. Here the doctor treated successfully some of his worst cases and here also came prominent surgeons from the neighbouring cities to do major operations for those patients who preferred to remain near home.

"During the influenza epidemic in 1918, the doctor worked day and night till he fainted under the strain. He was put to bed with pneumonia and stayed there one week. The only help he could get was a fourth-year medical student, and long before he was able the doctor was back to work again. The heart-breaking strain of those long months told upon him, and in the next few years he developed angina pectoris. He knew what to expect, but kept quietly on, set all his affairs in order, kept his knowledge to himself and died without warning on March 6, 1926, after a day among his patients. The day of his funeral was one of blustering March winds and breaking roads yet time and distance could not keep the multitude of his friends and patients away. They came from far and near to add their token of appreciation of a good and great physician".

The practice was taken over by Dr. M. Fletcher who still carries this practice on after almost fifty years.

Another early doctor in Exeter was Dr. Winans. Winans was born in Simcoe in 1812, married Millison Anne Carson in 1837 and came to Exeter in 1863 where he opened a medical practice and drug store. He had previously practiced in Picton and Georgetown. Winans was an Exhorter and Local Preacher in the Methodist Church and a member of the Y.P.C.A. Dr. Winans had two sons both of whom led interesting but tragically short lives. George E. A. Winans the elder son became a doctor after first doing a year at the Toronto Normal School. He studied medicine with his uncle Dr. G. A. Carson of Whitby. He completed his studies without attending medical school and obtained his medical certificate in late 1864. In early 1865 like thousands of other Canadian boys he went to the war dividing the United States and joined the Union Army. He became a surgeon in Grant's army and was posted to Harewood Hospital near Washington. Among descriptions of the hospitals he wrote the following in a letter to his uncle:

> "Why they think no more of cutting off a leg or arm than you do in Canada of pulling a tooth. I do not know how many arms and legs I have seen amputated. They are heaped upon the floor in great piles and blood covers the floor so thickly that we might as well say we were wading in blood".

He went on to say that "medicines are dispensed lavishly; ounces of morphine are used every day; hogsheads of simple cerate".

The young doctor through overwork and exposure to unsanitary conditions in the hospital became ill and returned home to

Exeter where despite his father's loving care, he died on June 14, 1865 at the age of twenty-seven.

Winans' other son, William Henry was born in Rockford, Illinois, in 1840, and moved with the family in 1852 to Picton, Canada. As was noted Dr. Winans was a devout Methodist and the religious atmosphere of the home prompted William to become a preacher. William had attended Toronto Normal School and in 1859 had taken a school in Stephen township near Exeter. He came under the guidance of Mr. Chapman the superintendent of the Exeter Circuit of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. He entered full time preaching and was attached to the Strathroy Circuit. It was noted that he eventually became dissatisfied with the response of the people of Strathroy and announced a prayer meeting at 5 a.m. followed by preaching at 7:30 a.m. We are led to believe that this disciplinary act had a salutary effect on the congregation at least for a time. This fanaticism was revealed again and again by Winans. Once in Tillsonburg he was preaching at a tight rope walkers' show to a crowd more interested in the show than his preaching but he persisted until a seller of beer and cider moved him on. He worked fanatically at his preaching so hard, in fact that he fell ill and died in Exeter May 30, 1866 at his father's home not quite a year after his brother George had died.

Dr. Winans died on March 24, 1874. His medical practice and drug store were taken over by Dr. Lutz who remained until 1903 when the drug store was taken over by W. Cole. The store was located where Bob's Variety is now.

Dr. Young Cowan, born in Belfast in 1834, had an office on James Street just across from the Central Hotel, about where Russells' side entrance is now. He was in Exeter in the early 1860's. Dr. Cowan was a great horse man and is reported to have built a fine new stable which was equipped with electricity and a telephone. Apparently Dr. Cowan's interest in horses was greater than his interest in patients at times, since it is reported in the Times in 1884 that a man called at Cowan's office one night seeking medical aid for his wife. He said that "Dr. Cowan met me with a scowl, hissed out an oath from between his teeth and shut the door in my face." It was further reported in the Times that the poor man called on three more doctors before getting one to go with him. Dr. Lutz finally went. Dr. Cowan practiced in Exeter from the late 1860's to about 1893 when he moved to Galt. Cowan later became Chairman of Pathology and Bacteriology of the Chicago Post Graduate Medical School. He eventually returned to Canada and died in London at the age of eighty-six. His practice in Exeter was taken over by Dr. Amos whose medical training had been obtained at Trinity College, Toronto, Glasgow, London, and Edinborough. Dr. Amos lived on

Andrew Street, was a Presbyterian and a Liberal. He sold out to Dr. H. R. Bright.

Other early doctors included Dr. Morden, who advertised as a Homoeopathic Surgeon and whose office was "next to Hawden's Marble Works". Morden practiced in the 1870's. There was Dr. Irving with an office south of Grigg's store. Irving later practiced in Kirkton. Dr. R. C. Moore was another early doctor.

Dr. Hutchinson was in Exeter in the 1870's and owned the famous race horse "Galt Reporter". Dr. James Ardah Rollins practised from the 1880's until 1905. Rollins although married to the sister of Thomas Greenway was himself an active Conservative. Rollins was born in Biddulph Township in 1847 and graduated from medical school in 1869. He sold his practice to Dr. A. F. Malloy who sold to Dr. Quackenbush.

Certainly the most well-known medical personality in Exeter must have been Dr. Joseph W. Browning M.D., M.C.P.S. Dr. Browning claimed to be the oldest practising doctor in Canada; he was still practicing when he died in his one hundredth year on December 24, 1942. Joseph W. Browning was born in Glastonbury, Somerset on November 21, 1843; he and his family emigrated to Upper Canada in 1845, settling in Markham. Browning's father was a watchmaker and telegrapher. While in Markham a sister of Browning operated the telegraph for the father who was the Markham agent for the Whitby and Georgian Bay Telegraph Company. Young Joseph Browning learned the art of telegraphy by observing his sister and took over the job himself at the age of thirteen when his sister was married. Browning in later years told of copying reports of the Crimean War as they came over the wire; he never forgot the telegrapher's art and could still operate the key in his nineties.

In addition to learning telegraphy Browning also began learning his father's watch and clock making trade. He decided, however, that medical studies were to be his chief interest and he left Markham to attend Victoria College, University of Toronto. In order to put himself through medical school he worked as a photographer, wrote fiction, skits and news reports for newspapers. Following his university work he completed his medical training under Dr. Rolfe.

In 1866 Browning moved to Hay Township and on July 3, 1867 he opened his drug store, the Dominion Medical Laboratory, and medical practice in the store which still bears the Browning name. At that time it was one door north of N. Davis' blacksmith shop. Dr. Browning carried on his practice from the same office until his death seventy nine years later, although he did not really practice much medicine during the last two or three years of his life. His was a remarkable career. During his practice he is supposed to have brought around three thousand babies into the world. That he worked hard is attested to by the fact that he "used up nineteen horses" during his practice. These horses pulled Browning's gig described as a cross between a jinrickshaw and a carretela, "the like of which never existed before or since". He enjoyed the practice of medicine and remarked

> "I can really say that I never practiced for money for whenever I took a patient I hated like the devil to be licked. I wanted to cure the patient if I never got a farthing."

That he should have lived such a long and active life surprised even Browning himself in a way since he had been sickly throughout his early life. He remarked that he had "never been three months out of a doctor's care until I became a doctor myself". He attributed his longevity to his "moderate" habits and "hard work". He did not drink, but he did smoke cigars. His abstention from alcoholic drink was probably a result of having non-drinking parents whose wedding was reported to have been the first "dry" wedding in that area of Somerset where liquor, hard cider and hard perry flowed abundantly. He ate sparingly although he did increase his weight from the ninety-eight pounds he weighed on July 3, 1867 to one hundred and seventy five pounds by 1941. He was very careful in his eating habits suggesting, accurately enough that "people dig their graves with their teeth".

He was a man who had wide interests as we have already noted. Medicine, and pharmacology, telegraphy, watch making, photography, writing, reading, water color painting were among his interests; at the age of ninety three he took a course in dramatics and elocution. As we have noted he practiced both his medical and pharmaceutical professions until he was well into his ninety's; when he was ninety-three he renewed a prescription for a man who had obtained the original order twenty two years before. On another occasion he renewed a prescription forty-eight years old. On both occasions it took him only a few minutes to pick out the prescription from his well maintained records.

In 1937 at the age of ninety three, J. W. Browning was reported to be the oldest living graduate of Victoria College, the oldest active physician in Canada and the longest on the job.

Dr. Browning's wife, whom he married after coming to Exeter, was the daughter of John McDonnell and Dorothy Balkwill. She died in 1931. Their family included two sons who became doctors — Dr. J. Harry Browning and Dr. William E. Browning, both of whom were active in establishing a hospital in Caledonia, Minnesota. George Fenwick described Dr. Browning in the following words:

> "Dear Dr. Browning, the truest, most faithful, most capable, most conscientious and self-sacrificing human being that either an individual or a community could claim as a friend. For steeped as he was body and soul in that divine largeness which was the better part of him, stressed to administer to the stricken ones where and when the call came, be it night or day, through darkness, sunshine or storm, through slush and mud, snowdrifts, or hard, rutted country roads leading out into the sparsely-settled and almost inaccessible parts of a raw, up-building country where stricken ones lived in shacks, often hid from view of the roads so that they were difficult to locate, and where the very primitiveness of the living offered him less than no aid at all in his administrations and where he had to fight ignorance, sloth and unsanitary conditions in addition to the disabilities of his patients — but where the very man in him never faltered, and where his admirable courage never flagged, where his self-sacrificing self and his will to do was always in the ascendency, where the surety to aid or cure was always a paramount part of him, where kindness of heart and optimism of spirit flooded the sick room to the elimination of all else and to the entirety of himself — this was the man Dr. Browning, often sorely tried but never found to be wanting in all those close unto seventy five years of his special calling and of his life so long among the good people of Exeter and surrounding country. And he stands today an embodiment of the highest type of citizen and public benefactor that any community in any part of the civilized world could lay claim to and honor."

These are some of the early doctors in Exeter. In addition to the resident doctors, Exeter, like the other small towns and villages in Ontario, experienced the periodic visits of doctors who advertised themselves as specialists. Such visiting doctors usually set up temporary quarters in one of the hotels and advertised in the papers and sent out leaflets. For example in 1882 Dr. Sinclair, "a specialist in heart and lungs," advertised his presence at the Commercial Hotel. The Advocate urged its readers to see Dr. Sinclair saying "remember this fellow is none of your damn Yankee Quacks". A herbalist was at the Central Hotel on one occasion who cured "all diseases". Dr. Thomas Speer was another visiting physician in the 1880's. He was billed as "Thomas Speer M.D., M.C.P.S. and O.S. and L.T.C.D. The Great East Indian Physician and Surgeon". His leaflets suggested that he was "satisfied to relinquish previous professional emoluments, and confine himself to the treatment of Nasal Catarrh, Cancer, Consumption, Bronchitis, Asthma, Skin Diseases, Rheumatism, Sciatica, Fever Sores, Salt Rheum, Scrofulous Diseases, liver diseases, kidney and Urinary troubles, Bright's disease, Dropsy, Strictures, Pimples on the face, Malaria, Ague, Diseases of women and diseases of a special, difficult and dangerous character". Dr. Speer suggested that by going around the country treating such ailments he could render "greater service to the afflicted" than if he remained in one place.

A Dr. W. S. Dempsey, osteopath and chiropractor spent about a year in Exeter before moving on. His advertising began with the question:

"Is Nature Starting to Foreclose the Mortgage on Your Health?" He treated all manner of ailments from asthma, appendicitis, constipation and female weaknesses to St. Vitus Dance and everything in between.

Other Exeter Doctors included Dr. McGillicuddy who was succeeded by Dr. M. O. Graham. Dr. Graham practiced from 1919 to 1929 — where Dr. Read's practice is now — before going to Formosa as a medical missionary. Graham was succeeded by Dr. Dunlop. Over more recent years such names as Dr. J. E. Jackson, Dr. R. H. Doyle, Dr. F. J. Milner, Drs. Butson, Schulthies, Read, Oans and Ecker come to mind. Dr. John Ward (Chiropractic and Electric Treatments) practiced for well over thirty years until the 1950's. Mention should also be made perhaps of the mid-wives such as "Granny" Heywood who brought one hundred and two babies into the world.

While not Exeter doctors the following medical practitioners were Exeter boys — Dr. Hugh Creech, Dr. T. Harry Seldon who joined the Mayo Clinic, Dr. J. H. Browning, Dr. W. E. Browning, Dr. T. H. Legett, born in Exeter June 4, 1878, he became President of the Canadian Medical Association, Dr. Stuart Stanbury, Dr. L. L. Hooper. Dr. Margaret Strang should also be mentioned. Dr. Strang practiced for many years in the frontier area of Alberta.

Dr. Hugh Creech distinguished himself in research at the Institute for Cancer Research in Philadelphia.

Among the early dentists to practice in Exeter were H. L. Billings whose office was over O'Neil's Bank and who advertised "nitrous oxide for painless extraction". G. T. Wilkie practiced on Fridays at the Commercial Hotel in the 1870's. There was also Henry Kinsman who had been born in Cornwall, England in 1831 and who tried carpentry, book and stationery sales before taking up dentistry. He came to Exeter in 1871 first practicing in an office south of Bell's Bakery and then in one located above Stanbury's law office. Kinsman extracted "Teeth without pain using vegetable vapour". He died in 1903 of "an internal growth" and was succeeded by his son, A. R. Kinsman who was joined in 1906 by G. F. Roulston "a thorough mechanic"; the offices were over Carling's law office. Roulston continued the practice for years being succeeded eventually by Dr. Corbett. Dr. J. A. Ellis had an office in Fan son's Block in the 1880's and 90's and specialized in "artificial teeth". H. R. Abbott came periodically to Exeter in the 1870's and set up in the Central Hotel, he was billed as a "specialist in gold fillings". C. Cartwright took over Billings' office above O'Neil's in 1885 and when he went to California a few years later his son W. E. Cartwright took over.

Other dentists that practiced in Exeter include Dr. David Alton Andersen whose office was over Elliott's law office opposite the Central Hotel, Dr. William Lawson, Dr. G. S. Atkinson, and presently of course, Drs. Cowen and Gratton as well as Dr. Corbett. Dr. Atkinson shot himself while cleaning his rifle in Bayfield in 1935. Atkinson had been a major in the first World War and was given a military funeral.

The veterinary profession has been represented in Exeter for over one hundred years. One of the first "vets" — if not the first, was William Sweet whose office was "opposite Hooper and Bissett's Grocery" which as we noted was one door south of Samwell and Pickards. Dr. J. Fishburn was another early vet. Drs. Tennant and Tennant had an office where the library now stands; the office was north of Russell's blacksmith shop and just west of Joseph Bawdens' house and pig barn. Tennant sold to Dr. Ramsey, in 1904. Other vets include Dr. Henry Coursault whose office was in Bakers' Livery Barn on James Street. Dr. Houze, Drs. Vinning and Sweet whose offices were on the corner of John and Andrew. Dr. J. G. Reid and Dr. E. S. Steele whose office was first in the old McDonnell Horse Barn on John Street. The present veterinarian is Dr. Roelofson.

The first lawyer to open an office in Exeter was Benjamin Valeck Elliott, who came to Exeter in 1860 after having studied and practiced law in Plymouth, Devonshire. Elliott was a Devon man, his birthplace being Kingsand, Devon in 1815. Elliott's office was directly across from the Central Hotel. Elliott built the house occupied later by Dr. Dunlop. He had ten children, seven sons and three daughters. He was "always a staunch Conservative" and an Anglican. He died in 1899 of an affliction of the bladder in his eighty fourth year. His obituary reads in part:

> "One after another the veterans of Exeter's business circle are departing from among us leaving only the lustre of their untarnished names and the example of their exemplary lives for the guidance and emulation of the younger generation. His life affords a striking example of the success which invariably attends devotion to duty."

Elliott's wife died in 1915 at the age of ninety. B. V. Elliott had been joined in 1897 by F. W. Gladman who practiced law in Exeter for some years after Elliott's death going into an office with J. G. Stanbury a few years later. J. G. Stanbury had come to Exeter in 1898 and entered the office of R. H. Collins who had come to Ex eter about 1887. Collins died in May 1900 and the facts of his life are best illustrated by quoting his obituary:

> "In the death of this gentleman who passed away at his residence on James Street, Exeter loses one of the most brilliant and promising barristers in Ontario. His legal career has been spent in our midst and for many years past he has been a familiar figure on our streets. A man of striking presence and oratorical power, while in health no public meeting was considered properly conducted without him and his great abilities were given in the most good natured and enthusiastic way. In politics a strong Liberal, he has pulled his party through many a wordy contest and was known as a first-class speaker throughout Ontario. Gifted with a magnificent voice and thoroughly conversant with music, many will remember the Trivitt Memorial church choir as he led it and the thrilling power of his sympathetic tones in many a sacred passage . . . His success as a lawyer was phenomenal . . . he could sway a jury, mass an array of legal facts."

Collins had been born in Bandon, County Cork, Ireland in 1854. He had come to Canada with his mother in 1861. He taught public school in Shakespeare, high school in Stratford, but eventually entered the office of H. W. Hall, Barristers. The office was in the Samwell Block. There he studied law for several years. In 1887 he passed his bar examinations without attending college and began his own practice, taking over Hall's office. He suffered for months from a growth on the sciatic nerve and "bore with wonderful patience agony of the most excruciating nature." Collins's office was in Samwell's Block where Hall's had been.

In addition, then, to the legal firms of Elliott and Gladman, Collins and Stanbury there was also the firm of Dickson and Carling. All of these firms existed simultaneously giving Exeter six lawyers at the turn of the century. L. G. Dickson practised in Exeter from the 1890's for several decades. "Judge Dickson was born in Pembroke in 1860 and received his primary education in the Pembroke Schools, and later attended Toronto University. After his graduation he studied the rudiments of law in the office of L. E. Dancey in Seaforth for two years, afterwards studying at Osgoode Hall from which he graduated in 1885. He became a successful lawyer in Exeter being the senior member of Dickson and Carling, until his appointment in 1916 to the senior judgeship in Huron County. Dickson was described as "an admirable judge". He was severe with seasoned or graceless offenders, he was merciful to those more sinned against than sinning." Dickson was an Anglican and a Conservative. He died in 1923 when a fatal heart attack struck him in his office. His wife was Jenny MacDonnell.

The junior partner in the Dickson and Carling firm was Isaac Routledge Carling, son of old Isaac Carling. Isaac Jr. lived in the old Carling house on Huron Street. The house was maintained in magnificent style. The following article describing the Carling estate was written by J. M. Southcott in 1932, and is given here since the Carling house was the most luxurious home in Exeter:

> "Lovers of nature in our beautiful village should spend an hour or two on the spacious grounds belonging to Mr. Isaac R. Carling K. C. It was our privilege to spend an hour or more exploring and enjoying the beauties of this fine property. The splendid butternut and Japanese Walnut trees give ample shade on a hot day to those who wish to rest or sit quietly while enjoying the delightful views across spacious lawns or admiring the hedgerows of tall evergreens besides many other trees scattered here and there. Taken altogether it reminds one of some parklike surroundings of large and prosperous institutions. Viewed from the street the fine Corinthean like columns in the front of the home give an impressive appearance to the splendid residence in which he and his sisters live and remind one of the specimens of Grecian and Roman architecture that have come down to us. But it is when we approach from the rear of the property that our sense of the beautiful in gardens is aroused and satisfied. Leading up from the rear entrance is a fine cement walk about nine feet wide and lined with flowers on each side. On the left there in great luxuriance are many varieties of the old fashioned but beautiful stocks, that our grandmothers loved, interspersed with Zinnias, Nicotine, Phlox, etc. On the right side were lovages, snapdragons, ageratum, pansies. Then as we travelled farther we came across splendid specimens of bergamot, rudbeck a purpurea and the somewhat scarce but beautiful amaryllas. We must not omit other flowers such as amaranthus, hydrangeas, golden glow and tritoma. As we wandered around we passed over to the west side meeting surprises everywhere we went when lo we came upon his rose garden with roses most beautiful and twice the size they are generally. His collection of gladioli was a delight to see. The vegetable gardens were just as fine as the flowers."

Carling practiced law in Exeter until his death in 1934. Carling continued the family's tradition in politics and in religion, being staunchly Conservative and Anglican.

J. G. Stewart Stanbury joined Collins in 1898. After the death of both Collins and Elliott, Stanbury and Gladman formed a legal firm. Stanbury practised in Exeter from 1898 to 1935. During those thirty-seven years he was "a pillar of the community," serving on the Board of Education, Horticulture Society, and the Huron Liberal Association. Like Carling, Stanbury was an avid gardener; he won many prizes at both the Western Fair and the Canadian National Exhibition. Stanbury was born in Bayfield, the son of a doctor. One of Stanbury's own sons, Stewart, also became a doctor. Stewart Stanbury enjoyed an active medical career making important contributions in the development of insulin. His research on tuberculosis and his work with the Red Cross. Another son, Richard, is now a senator and an important figure in the Liberal Party organization in Canada and Robert present Federal Minister of Revenue. W. M. Martin who became a Liberal Premier of Saskatchewan articled in the Gladman and Stanbury office. In 1935 Stanbury was made King's Council and in 1938 he was appointed to a judgeship in Lincoln County.

The Gladman-Stanbury practice was assumed in 1941 by William G. Cochrane and is now in the hands of Peter Raymond. Interestingly this practice has always been politically Liberal. The Carling Dickson practice conversely has always been politically Conservative. When Carling died in 1934 the practice was assumed by James Morley. Elmer D. Bell purchased the practice in 1946. Bell had started a practice in Seaforth and Brussels before the war having graduated from Osgoode in 1932 after serving in the Canadian Army and distinguishing himself with the artillery. After his war service Bell came to Exeter where he has practiced ever since in partnership with C. V. Laughton. Elmer Bell served the Progressive Conservative Party in many ways including service as President of the Ontario Party.

Over the years other lawyers, notaries and other legal officials have had practices in Exeter. Some of those whose names are known were M. McFadden, the firm of Malcomson, Watson and Cuddy, J. Elliott, C. F. Clarke and A. Horney.

For over a century then, Exeter has had an active business community. The preceding pages do little more than recall the names of some of the people who were involved in business of one kind or another in Exeter during the past one hundred and twenty five years or so. The business community seems to have always been a prosperous one. In 1902 the Times made the following remarks:

> "Exeter has long been noted as one of the most substantial towns in Western Ontario and situated as it is in the centre of the finest farming section in Huron County, the Banner County in the province, it is well able to hold its own. While Exeter has not been visited by booms it has always enjoyed a healthy and steady growth. . . . Our town has always enjoyed the reputation of having among its merchants the most enterprising, up-to-date businessmen to be found in the province."

The Times was always urging the citizens to keep the business community prosperous. "Be loyal to your town" said the Times. "The merchants you patronize may someday be able to direct a dollar into your pocket. In any event you needn't look for work or patronage from the Toronto departmental sharks."

Generally the citizens of Exeter and area have supported the

local business community and Exeter has been a prosperous town. Even during the Depression this area probably suffered less than many other Ontario communities. Exeter and the adjacent agricultural townships continue to prosper and hold their own despite the continuing centralizing trend in Ontario. This trend to centralization in the giant urban areas is taking its toll in rural and small town Ontario, but the south part of Huron is not losing population to the extent that many other areas of the province are.

Other chapters will deal with the type of businesses that were not mentioned in this chapter.

chapter 3

Cigarettes and Whiskey and Wild, Wild, Women
Hotels, Booze, Temperance

"Inside the door ajar
They hid the liquor bar
I have a horror of those shutters
For there the wounded spirit flutters
Ah! many go therein
To find the path of sin

(from a Temperance Poem 1857)

Hotels, inns and taverns were among the first services established in a pioneer area. They were essential and there were many of them located along the roads. From London to Goderich there were thirty or forty inns as early as the 1840s. In or quite near to Exeter there were a number of primitive inns established in the early years of settlement. Regulations governing these inns were established by the township councils. Usborne township passed a bylaw on October 3, 1854 regulating taverns. The regulations included "no drinking of intoxicating liquors on Sundays"; card playing, dice and gambling were prohibited. The minimum number of beds that the tavern keeper had to provide were five. He also had to maintain a driving shed and an open shed for a minimum of five teams ... also a house of convenience.

McConnell's Inn was established near where the Presbyterian Church now stands in Exeter. This was the first "hotel" in Exeter and was established in 1833 as a result of Canada Company instructions to McConnell to establish the inn. David McConnell operated an inn in Francistown in the 1840's. The Balkwill family operated a small tavern in the "Devonshire Settlement" a short distance south of Exeter at the Crediton Road. Also south of Exeter on the corner was Joseph Quick's "Black Horse Inn" established gradually in the 1830's; this inn was on a farm later owned by a Mr. Walker about two miles south of the town. On the Usborne side of the London Road the tavern licence cost eight pounds in 1857. Usborne charged only five pounds for licences off the London Road.

There were inns every few miles along the settlement roads and they provided much needed stopping places where the travellers could rest and eat. They were oases in the Upper Canadian wilderness. Once coach and stage travel became regular operations the inns were the stopping points. There were dozens of inns and taverns within a ten mile radius of Exeter; however, a survey of all of these hostelries is beyond the scope of this work which will deal primarily with Exeter.

The hotels not only provided stops for the stages, and for those settlers who walked, where food, rest and lodging could be obtained; they also provided whiskey. Whiskey was cheap throughout Upper Canada; seldom exceeding twenty-five cents for an Imperial gallon, it remained this inexpensive for decades. "Upper Canadian Nectar" was the label frequently applied to the raw whiskey of Ontario. Our fair province acquired a reputation of being one of the most drunken areas known. Visitors and observers were "appalled by the destruction and the waste of human resources in Upper Canada from the drinking of raw whiskey." The author of "Ryerson of Upper Canada" also commented that "cheap rot gut whiskey was the quickest means of blotting out the disappointment and the desperation. The spectacle of sodden, ugly drunkenness was familiar to all those who lived in Upper Canada. ... Grain was cradled, barns raised, potatoes hoed, evenings passed, trees cut, all with the solace and assistance of whiskey." "Nights on the trail had to be endured at zero and below. Travellers believed they could survive the cold if they had a bottle of spirits tucked into their blankets. The folklore worked and many travellers survived. ..." There was little restraint on the trade. Farmers could pick up a gallon for twenty five cents to quench their thirst as they worked in their fields. Stores sold liquor of all kinds. Distilleries were dotted across the country supplying the needs of the settlers. It was a common thing to find a barrel of whiskey on the front porch of a house with a ladle nearby. It was the hospitality of the owner that put it there. The visitor was welcome to take a tot when arriving and departing. Naturally there was a reaction to this widespread drunkenness in Ontario. By the 1870's a strong Temperance movement was flourishing in the province. Doctors and medicine producers were advertising cures for drunkenness. The Exeter area was no different from the rest of Ontario as it passed through the pioneer period of taverns, hotels, liquor in stores, widespread drinking and then the movements for control and Temperance. We will look briefly at these activities in Exeter.

As we noted, the first inn was McConnell's just south of the river. It may have been called the Red Elephant Hotel but this is unconfirmed. We also noted David McConnell's inn which was on the site of Digory Braund's house, near the present location of John Snell's garage. David McConnell's inn is mentioned in the minutes of December 1842 of the united townships of Usborne, Stephen and Hay. It stated that notice of a meeting of these townships was posted in David McConnell's inn, William Balkwill's inn and William Case's house. The meeting on the first Monday in January 1843 was to be held at David McConnell's inn.

William Balkwill had a tavern from the 1840's to the 1860's. Robert Armstrong was listed as bartender. By the 1860's there were more elaborate hotels making their appearance in the growing village. In the early 1860's mention was made in various sources of Drew's Hotel, The Exeter Hotel operated by James Gordon and at other times owned by Richard Roach and managed by W. H. Adams. The Exeter Hotel in 1871 was operated by Thomas Elston. The British Exchange Hotel operated by John McBride was referred to only once and may have been erroneously included in the list of Exeter businesses. The names Lorne Hotel, Queens Hotel and the Union Hotel also appeared as well as the Sable Hotel which was operated by Robert Bissett in the 1860's. It is difficult to be certain of the location of some of the early hotels; some may be the same hotels that developed later under different names. In any case during the period of the past one hundred years Exeter has gone from the position of having many hotels to having none. Only one of the old hotel buildings still stands, this is the business block at the corner of Ann and Main Streets now occupied by a bake shop and other stores. This building was the Commercial Hotel. The others are gone. The Central Hotel, Exeter's largest, was demolished to provide space for the British Mortgage and Trust — now the Victoria and Grey Trust Company office. The Mansion House was on the southwest corner of Main and Huron Streets, the Metropolitan Hotel was on the site now occupied by Dobbs' car lot at the corner of Wellington and Main Streets. The Station Hotel also known as the Exeter Temperance House was on property near the railway now occupied by the canning factory. The Royal Hotel was on Main Street near the site of the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Exeter North Hotel or Walper Hotel was on the corner of the Lake Road and the London Road where the Guenther-Tuckey lot is now located. Balkwill's Tavern was located near the former Silas Handford house on Main Street. A brief sketch of each of these hostelries is given below. It is likely that no more than five inns existed in the village simultaneously. In 1874 five tavern licences were issued to W. E. Wilkins, E. J. Wilkins, William Drew, James Towers and Edward Christie; two shop licences were issued. In 1875 five licences to Drew's Hotel (William Drew), The Britannia House (John Pratt), The Francistown Hotel (James Towers), The Mansion House (William Hawkshaw) and W. E. Wilkins, the Central Hotel.

The Walper Hotel

In 1875 the village council limited by law the number of taverns to five. The village appointed an Inspector of Taverns whose job it was to enforce the regulations governing taverns, including the hours that liquor could be sold. In Exeter sales had to cease at ten p.m. but could begin at five a.m. in the morning.

1. The Walper Hotel

This hostelry was a large building in Francistown and operated under various names, the Exeter North Hotel, The Exeter North Temperance House and the Francistown Hotel. It was operated in the late 1860's and early 1870's by James Towers. Abel Walper acquired it and then in 1877 sold it to H. Martin. In the 1860's the hotel was considered to be one of the finest in the country. It had been erected in the early 1850's possibly by Matthew Rogers. In the 1860's it was operated by James Towers as the Francistown Hotel. Walper probably bought it from Towers. Walper in 1877 went to Berlin (Kitchener) and evidently had something to do with the construction of Kitchener's now famous Walper House.

The hotel was across the Lake Road from Fenwick's Mill and drew trade from the farmers coming into the mill with their grain. George Fenwick, a son of the mill owner, told the following stories about the Walper Hotel. On the occasion of the Fenwick's arrival in Exeter from Zurich one of the Fenwick children pointed to the imposing structure and asked.

"What's that over there, Mother?"

"That's a den of iniquity and I want you boys to keep away from there," replied Mother.

"What's a den of inickety?" asked the boy.

"It's a terrible place where they drink that terrible whiskey and fight — so never go near the place", was Mrs. Fenwick's ominous warning.

But boys being boys, young George did go into Walper's saloon. Young George had acquired a cheese sandwich from the bar and Mr. Walper handed him a mug of beer saying, "Here sonny, take this and quench your thirst."

"I don't want your old whiskey", was the reply.

"Whiskey, ho, ho, ha, ha, why that's good old lager beer" Walper told the boy.

Fenwick no doubt recalling his mother's warning was about to pour the contents of the mug on the floor when a hand shot out and snatched the glass, "No you don't, sonny" and a gnarled old farmer drained the mug.

The Walper Hotel had a reputation for being a wild place. It was referred to as the noisy saloon. The Times carried an item in 1873 which illustrated the noisy nature of the saloon. It seemed that "a couple of navvies who had been away with the volunteers stopped in at the hotel. They eventually became drunk and noisy and started fighting. During the fight "one of them named McDonald had his nose bitten off by Bruce Brewolen". Dr. Morden tried to repair the hanging flesh and bone'.

Attached to the south end of the hotel was the store operated by Trick and Currelly. Thomas Currelly had come to Exeter some time in the 1860's or early 1870's. Currelly's wife was a Treble whose family had come from Devonshire. Currelly's son Charles T. Currelly became the first curator of the Royal Ontario Museum

and a world renowned archeologist. In his book "I Brought The Ages Home", Currelly has the following harsh words about Exeter's hotels:

> "There were four hotels where the board was three dollars a week, or a dollar a day for transients, and where the main living was made by selling beer and whiskey. The hotel keepers were socially outside the pale and, I think, deservedly because a more contemptible crowd it was hard to find. The wholesale liquor people who did business with them said that theirs was the hardest, meanest trade it was possible to imagine. A few loafers hung around the hotels, and the only time I ever saw a man horsewhipped was when an old, lame, enormously fat hotel keeper horsewhipped a strong young man. Though I was only five or six years old I can remember this young man crying while the big horsewhip came down rhythmically across his back and legs."

Currelly is being overly harsh and is no doubt using the one hotel to make an unwarranted generalization. The hotel he talks about is most surely the Walper Hotel since the young Currelly would not likely be wandering from Francistown a mile or more to the site of the other hotels. Who the fat hotel keeper was is difficult to say. Abel Walper sold out to Martin in 1877 and Martin sold to L. W. Gudwig in 1884. Gudwig had plans to erect a brewery on Fenwick's property and since he was manager of Carling's Lager Beer Department he knew the business. However, this industry did not develop. Later on another Walper operated the hotel. In 1892 the hotel was renovated and painted.

Currelly as a boy not only had the goings on at the hotel and the mill to watch he also had Digory Braund's blacksmith shop and Alex MacPherson's Wagon Shop next to the store to provide a summer day's occupation. Braund, by the way, was the first organist at the Bible Christian Church in Exeter.

As the nineteenth century came to a close, the Exeter North Hotel ceased to be the wild noisy establishment that it was for thirty years and became a Temperance House first under Leonard McTaggart's ownership and then John Morley's. It was eventually sold to George Armstrong who tore part of it down. Les Gibson tore the rest of the building down when he erected a service station on the corner.

It was in the Walper Hotel that Lancelot Hardy, a long time Reeve of the village, scared a poor tramp half to death. Hardy and his cronies were sitting around the saloon when some fellows dragged the tramp before Hardy's table. Hardy held a mock court and ordered the tramp on pain of tar and feathers never to set foot in Exeter again. The tramp was last seen running north towards Rodgerville as fast as he could run.

The Walper Hotel then provided a colorful chapter in the history of Exeter. One comment should be added to Currelly's view that the hotel keepers were some kind of monsters. It is clear that in Exeter this was not generally true. Hotel keepers like Oke, Acheson, Hawkshaw, Leathorn and others were among Exeter's leading citizens and not in the least deserving of Currelly's condemnation.

2. The Royal Hotel

This inn was located in "the heart of the business part of Exeter" where the Bank of Nova Scotia and Squire's house is now located. It was a large frame structure and had been built in the 1860's or even the late 1850's. It was a stage coach stop until the railway ended the London Road stage run. The Donnellys used the Royal as their Exeter headquarters for their stage operation. During the years before 1876 it was called the Union Hotel and was owned by E. J. Wilkins. In 1875 it was called the Britannia House and was operated by John R. Wilkins who sold it on May 8, 1876 to E. Christie who renamed it the Royal. Christie sold it to Richard Atkinson but seems to have got it back again by 1878. In 1883 it ended its life as a hotel when Christie sold it to Mr. Senior who used it as a photographic studio. It was used by various businessmen for various purposes until 1922 when Mr. Hooper purchased the old building and shortly thereafter tore it down.

3. Commercial Hotel

One of Exeter's early important businessmen E. Drew built this hotel about 1860. In the early 1870's it was acquired by John Hawkshaw who had previously operated a stage line which ran stages to London, Clinton, St. Marys and other points. More has been said elsewhere about the stage line. After he acquired the hotel he still retained a great interest in horses and owned many fine racers. John Hawkshaw died in the 1920's at the age of ninety-two. The "Times" commented that besides being an Anglican and a Conservative, he was a "well informed and highly respected resident." John sold the hotel to T. W. (Wes) Hawkshaw in the 1880's. Wes became a cigar salesman when he sold to W. Hawkshaw in 1901. In 1904 a Mr. Hanham purchased the business. In later years it was operated by Thomas Newell who was in 1914 the subject of the year's most talked about trial in Exeter. He was brought before, not one, but three magistrates, — W. D. Sanders, Joseph Hawkins, and J. Mott — on a charge of selling intoxicants to minors. The charge was dismissed when Newell proved that he was serving only "pop" and "local option beer."

It was said that the Commercial in the 1880's had the most "obliging chambermaids" in Exeter. One named "Rosie" was especially noteworthy.

The Commercial Livery and Feed Barn was located across the road where the Beverage plant is now situated. A man could stable, feed and water his horse for fifteen cents at the Livery barn. A garage was erected years later on the site.

C. B. Snell eventually acquired in 1916 the Commercial Hotel and converted it to other business operations about 1920.

4. The Metropolitan Hotel

This one was located at the corner of Main and Station Streets and was built some time after the railway came in 1876. The first station was at the end of the street and the owner no doubt hoped to attract station business and London Road business. There was a farmers' grain market across the road where the grocery store now stands. Here men like Lance Hardy, Cobbledick, Spicer and others would negotiate grain purchases. Undoubtedly transactions were completed over a drink in the Metropolitan's barroom. Mr. Johnson's little repair shop was Cobbledick's office and a story is told of how Lancelot Hardy is supposed to have put a cow in the office one night. Cobbledick discovered the shambles in the morning and was furious but he evidently never did find out who did it.

Various people owned this hotel including W. Zinger, Henry Centelon, W. Anderson, and James Campbell. The last owner was Mr. Smith who closed out the building's history as a hotel in the 1930's. In 1937 it became a chick hatchery; somehow this seems like an ignominious end for a hotel. The old hotel was torn down in 1970.

5. The Mansion House

The Mansion House was built in 1874 by R. Bissett for W. Hawkshaw on the corner of Main and Huron Streets. It was thirty-four feet by forty-six feet and had accommodation for thirty-five guests. It was "fitted out in great taste". Hawkshaw sold it to a Mr. Branscombe who sold it in 1890 to "Squire" Robert Leathorn. The Squire was a town character; he generally headed the parades astride a white horse, followed by the band. After Leathorn, James Shaddock and Charles Wilson were owners of the hotel. In 1902 the advertisements said "This house is all that a first class dollar a day house should be". The hotel was torn down in 1912 and three houses were erected in the place where it stood, by Wesley Snell and Arnold Marchand.

6. The Exeter Station Hotel

This was built in 1876 by James and George Willis on the site of a tavern stand owned by Isaac Carling who sold the site to George Willis. This hotel served the railway public for thirty years.

In 1906 it was known as Mitchell's Temperance House and it was sold in that year to the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company who tore it down in order to erect the factory

The Central Hotel and Stage Coach about 1880

7 The Central Hotel

James Oke acquired this, Exeter's most well known and "commodious" hotel in the mid 1870's. This hotel had previously been operated by W. E. Wilkins who may have built it in the early 1860's. It came to be known by Western Ontario's travelling public as having an excellent dining room with "attentive waiters who anticipate your wants". It advertised "the best wet goods and cigars" and was "from a sanitary point of view unexcelled". With "attentive hostlers", a genial clerk — John Mallott — and a first class bartender — Thomas Oke — the Central did a fine business. Of course, it was not free from some criticism. Occasionally there were "too many drinks" in the barroom and sometimes the bar did get noisy but usually the Central maintained its good reputation.

On December 13, 1888 the Hotel was sold by James Oke to Joseph Acheson's two sons James and Thomas. It will be remembered that Joseph Acheson was one of Exeter's first businessmen, opening the second store to operate in Exeter. It will also be recalled that Joseph Acheson presented the town with Victoria Park in the 1880's. The old Acheson house was directly across the street from the Carling home and was demolished when the present nurses' residence was erected in 1957. The house had been occupied over the years by several prominent citizens, Mr. Rollins the Grist Mill owner, A. E. Bennett, J. A. Stewart, R. N. Rowe, William Penhale and Dr. Steiner. Thomas Acheson was the father of Charles and Amelia Acheson the last owners and operators of the Central Hotel. The Acheson brothers paid twelve thousand, five hundred dollars for the hotel and were according to the Times "young men of ability being endowed with enterprise and indomitable zeal for all things pertaining to public welfare." Shortly after the purchase, W. T. Acheson married Florence Oke in the hotel. The Times remarked that it was "a brilliant evening at the Central."

W. Thomas Acheson sold the hotel in 1924 to a Mr. Chester Lee after thirty five years in the hotel. W. T. Acheson died in 1934 at the age of seventy-eight. In 1928 Lee sold the hotel to Edward Lowry having purchased Fitton's store and adding additional rooms over the store. Fitton's was in the old Fanson block. In the 1930's Homer Bagshaw owned the hotel. It eventually came back into the Acheson family who operated the hotel until the 1960's when it was removed after one hundred years of service, by the British Mortgage and Trust Company. Although no legal drinks were served in the hotels of Exeter after May 1, 1915 it was said that a thirsty man could assuage his thirst in the old Central Hotel back room, but naturally that is pure speculation.

So the end of an era came in the 1960's when the wreckers tore the Central down. Only the echoes of conviviality and occasional rowdiness remain to remind us of the days when "Exeter the dry" had up to seven tap rooms in the hotels of the village to provide places of entertainment and amusement for the men of the village.

As we have noted then, from the earliest times of settlement in Ontario right down to the present day the consumption of spirituous beverages has been a major pastime of the populace. Drinking was so common that one student of Upper Canadian history arrived at a consumption figure of something like thirty gallons of whiskey per person per year in the period 1830-1860. This seems like a considerable quantity but the hotels did do a flourishing business and even in a small village like Exeter the ratio of hotels to population would be high. At the time of the maximum number of operating saloons in Exeter the ratio would be of the order of one hotel for every two hundred and fifty men, women and children. And in addition to Exeter's hotels there were inns in Crediton, Khiva, Sarepta, Rodgerville, Brucefield, Elimville, Flanagan's Corners, Adare, Farquhar, Devon, Dashwood, Zurich, Hensall and in many other places only a few miles from Exeter. Not only did the hotels dispense beer, whiskey and other "fine wet goods" but many stores carried liquor, wine and beer. The best known stores in Exeter to sell spirits over the years included Isaac Carling's store, Maces' Grocery and Liquor Store, F. J. Knight, Horneys Store, Farmer Brothers, Browning's Drug Store and perhaps others. In 1873, by-law No. 2 of the Village of Exeter established licence fees of forty-five dollars for stores to sell liquor in "quantities not less than one quart". The licence fee for a "Tavern, Inn, Alehouse, Bar-house, or other place of Public Entertainment" was thirty-five dollars. Even with all of these available sources illicit stills were set up on farms to produce yet another supply of whiskey.

For decades and decades 'booze' was cheap and plentiful in Ontario, twenty-five cents for a gallon was the common price for whiskey and it was noted that the Sarepta Hotel sold it for nineteen cents a gallon. In 1925 James Sweet was eighty-five years old and in an item in the London Free Press, Sweet recalled how he had been employed to carry whiskey and water to labourers working on improving the London Road. "Whiskey of the best could be procured for twenty-five cents per gallon and was carried in a pail with a cup attached and every man helped himself. With regard to the [illegible] of the product he named a number of men known to him who lived to be over eighty-five and even over ninety and were never known to do without it." Whiskey and Methodism assuaged the lonely souls and aching backs of Ontario's rural population. Both numbed the hardships of early life in Upper Canada.

Despite the prevalent and widespread use of whiskey liquor offences did bring heavy fines and sentences. In 1867 in Goderich "convictions made by Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace within the United Counties of Huron and Bruce" were noted in an article appearing in the London Free Press in 1854. Some of the penalties are briefly indicated below.

> "James McCarroll was convicted of selling liquor without a licence and was fined twenty dollars. In the remarks column it was noted that the fine was not paid and McCarroll was sentenced to fifteen days at hard labor. Philip Nunn was convicted of acting as a brewer without a licence and fined forty dollars. Thomas Smith was convicted of selling liquor without a licence and was fined forty dollars.
>
> The usual fine after conviction on a charge of being drunk and disorderly was one dollar but it was a different matter to be drunk on the Sabbath. This cost twelve dollars."

Charivaris were other occasions of drunken behaviour. Indeed this rural Ontario custom was declared illegal in Exeter in 1873. By-law No. 13 of that year provided for a fine of one dollar to ten dollars or ten days in the gaol for "taking part in or aiding or abetting in a charivari." There was a charivari in Exeter in 1902 on

Huron Street that caused considerable number of complaints. Special constables were sworn in to restore order. Council was severely criticized then for going to the extra expense of hiring special constables. The Rev. C. W. Brown was particularly angry about the incident. As is well known however, the reaction to widespread drinking came to besotted Ontario. The Methodist Church was always anti-liquor and made much of people's decisions to give up drinking. For example John Carrol writes: "And then and there I found the resolute purpose not to touch another glass of ardent spirits, and I received strength to keep my purpose, giving up whiskey, rum, shrub, peppermint, beer and cider.

I also eschewed the harmless spruce, or root beer." In the 1870's the Temperance Lodges and Associations began to flourish. The Women's Christian Temperance Union is a relic of this period. The other groups, such as the Royal Templars of Temperance (in Exeter it was the Advance Council No. 207), The Sons of Temperance, the Huron County Temperance Convention, the United Temperance Association were well represented in Exeter and area. The purpose of these groups was "to rescue the perishing, restore the fallen and keep unsullied from the destructive influences of those whose energies are bent in leading astray the youth of our land . . . and to battle against the evils of strong drink."

The general pattern of the lodges was to hold regular business meetings and from time to time hold open public sessions with temperance oratory, readings, and temperance songs. It was said that "school teachers were, with few exceptions, active and influential members, leading many of the younger generation into these training schools for good citizenship."

In Exeter the Temperance Lodges enjoyed the support of some of the leading citizens. The Exeter Division, Sons of Temperance, in the 1880's, included in its list of officers R. Pickard, E. Bell, H. Harwood, R. Crocker, J. Gould, Charles Snell, W. Sharray and R. Seldon whose title was "Worthy Patriarch". The Royal Templars of Temperance, Advance Council 207 included as officers, J. E. Tom, J. P. Clerk, Miss E. Graham, J. Gregory, R. Gidley, R. E. Pickard, O. Guard, W. Manning, Miss Bell.

These two organizations with, naturally, the help of the clergy who preached regularly on the vice of liquor drinking led Exeter's march to sobriety. The Sons of Temperance held monthly penny readings in Parson's Hall; they had periodic public presentations in Drew's Hall. One such public meeting was held in January 1875 when a diminutive (5'4" tall) man with "long, waving ringlets" named Carswell waxed eloquently for one and one-half hours in the cause of Temperance. "The band turned out in full force and played a few appropriate tunes." These Temperance sessions

provided an evening's entertainment. The Royal Templars brought a famous group known as the Temperance Evangelists to the village in 1893. How much actual reduction in drinking the groups achieved is difficult to say but they did provide cheap amusement for many people.

Another antidote to the widespread drunkenness was the 'quick cure'. Advertisements appeared in the 'Times' and the 'Advocate' urging the readers to try C. C. Beer's (M.D.) cure. His advertisements were headed: "DRUNKARD STOP" and was followed by the notation that Beer's had a "harmless cure for intemperance which can be given without the knowledge of the patient, also one for the opium habit". "Tasteless Samaria Prescription" was another miracle cure. This product usually had advertisements which began:

"Her husband was a Drunkard"
"A lady who cures her husband of His
Drinking Habits writes of Her Struggle
to Save Her Home".

Then followed a "Pathetic Letter" explaining how "Tasteless Samaria Prescription" worked a miracle cure and stopped her husband's drinking. Other advertisements drew attention with "She Patiently Bore Her Disgrace" or "Her Father was a Drunkard".

Despite the noble efforts of the churches, the lodges and the "cures" people still got drunk. Indeed, in the summer of 1884 a traveller noted that "Exeter was the worst town in Ontario for loafers and loiterers hanging around the hotels and saloons". Also in that warm summer of 1884 much local interest was shown in what was referred to as

"The Drunken Frolic of the Sodomites"

> Sodom, a small community on the Lake Road had in the 1880's a few houses and the Stanlake Saw Mill. One warm and pleasant August evening "sweet songs" were heard by the passers by. Some of Stanlake's men had been drinking all day — of course this was a continuance of their daily habits". As the "whiskey frolic" continued a problem developed. By 9 p.m. the whiskey was all gone and, by God, the nearest whiskey was three miles away, presumably at the Walper Hotel. "The Stanlake brothers not having any extra fast horses were at a loss to know how to secure a fresh supply of whiskey in the quickest possible time. One of the boys, "the fire of craving burning within", made a bet he could run the three miles in fifteen minutes. Prior to his departure an eavesdropper heard the "sweet songs of Sodom" in the night. In a letter to the "Times" this eavesdropper said, "Let me give you a note or two: Sam Sile ... Sam Sile, then in a little lower tone, Gillie ... Gillie; more grog, more grog, whiskey all gone."

Shortly after this the runner started out for Exeter; he was half naked and certainly more than "half-stoned". It is uncertain as to the final result of the run, history does not record his time if indeed, he made the distance at all. It was however, suggested in the "Times" that in future the Sodomites keep cool and if a "hasty trip is necessary again" that a fast horse be taken rather than start out "a man half-naked." The writer went on to say:

'Come all ye Sodomites and learn
from the outcome of that night's frolic
not to touch, taste, or handle the accursed stuff"

Perhaps the Sodomites did take this advice for the Sodom Temperance League was formed with Silas Stanlake Jr. as President.

There is humor in such nocturnal adventures as the Sodom Whiskey Frolic but whiskey caused more tragic incidents as well. In the 1880's the "Times" reported the following: "A man named George M. abused his wife and infant in the Hay Swamp and cut Edward H.'s head open to the eyebrows with an axe". George was drunk when he did it.

The governments of Canada and Ontario could not long resist the pressure of the Temperance movement. Over the years Canada and Ontario passed more legislation concerning the liquor traffic than the average layman can sort out. No survey of this legislation is possible here but a few illustrations of how Exeter reacted to some of the laws are given.

In 1884 and 1885 the great controversy in Huron County and Exeter was over the Dominion Temperance act, more commonly referred to as the Scott Act. The columns of the "Times" and the "Reflector" were filled with items opposing and supporting the Act. This Act had to be voted in by the County or City jurisdiction. The basic clause of the Act was as follows:

"No Person, unless it be for exclusively
sacramental or medicinal purposes or for
bona fide use in some art, trade, or manufacture
shall expose or keep for sale give
to any other person any spirituous or intoxicating
liquor or any mixed liquor capable of being used
as a beverage and part of which is spirituous or otherwise
intoxicating."

Under the Act liquor could only be sold by druggists or specially licenced vendors. A village like Exeter was permitted only one outlet. In Exeter Dr. Browning's Drug Store was the licenced vendor and he could sell only to persons possessing medical certificates.

In the local debate J. J. White of the 'Times' was editorially neutral but the 'Reflector's' editor Mr. Muir, a former school teacher, "pitted himself tooth and nail against" the act. The 'Reflector' supported the Crooks Act which provided for [illegible] taverns, hotels and houses of entertainment and shops to be licenced under standards set by a Commission. Both papers contained numerous articles and letters. The general feeling of the community can be obtained by a few references to these articles; they are certainly too numerous and lengthy to reproduce in full.

Some people felt that the Act was wholly "theoretical and fanciful"; that it could not be enforced because "no temperance reform can be permanent till the people themselves resolve to be temperate". Others suggested that "men will get drunk just as long as fermentation continues to be a law of nature". One correspondent suggested that since there was only one drunk for every seven hundred males in the population it was unfair to deprive the other six hundred and ninety-nine of the simple pleasure of enjoying a drink. The same writer who signed himself "Moderation" said that people need "a slight stimulus", therefore, a little alcohol was better than having people turn to opium, morphine or chloral which he said women were already doing because it was frowned on if women took a drink.

But many others urged that the liquor traffic be destroyed; "drinking liquor is a species of self murder"; "liquor is degrading, worse than useless, the greatest curse that ever man has been visited with". "Presbyterian" wrote in August 1884 that "no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven which leaves the only other alternative of his taking up his abode where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth". Reference was made to the liquor "monster"; it must be "muzzled on principle of patriotism, Christian expediency" and a knife must be plunged through its heart. The liquor traffic must be destroyed forever was the theme of some letters.

Bishop Baldwin speaking to the Band of Hope said that "London ... is giving up young men every day to be eaten by the terrible serpent — DRINK — and sometimes young women too". He went on to say that liquor "encouraged idleness and destroyed the soul". "The man who keeps the rum shop has to face the curse. His traffic is the moral ruin of his neighbours ... his success is the moral degradation and ruin of the neighbourhood". "Protestant" wrote to point out that the Bible, however, provided support for the sale and use of wine, consequently, the Scott Act was contrary to the Divine Law.

It appeared, then, that "liquor was the greatest curse that ever man was visited with" or it was a positive benefit in that it provided a "slight stimulus" for those who needed a lift. One's viewpoint determined which of these positions was adopted. The writer who remarked that 70% of the people would violate the Scott Act was, of course, the most accurate observer. Perhaps the most bizarre comment was made at a meeting in the Drill Hall in October, 1884 when one man who opposed the Act spoke and said "it would retard the noble work of reforming Drunkards"

In any case the vote was held in Huron and the Act was voted in 7,029 to 3,813. In Exeter 262 voted for the Scott Act and 71 against. The effective date was May 1, 1885. During the two weeks previous to the date it is recorded that Exeter's liquor dealers did a huge business as the good people of the village stocked in as much liquor as they could afford in preparation for the long drought to come. After May 1, 1885 only Dr. Browning's Drugstore was lawfully entitled to dispense spirits and then only for clearly stated medicinal purposes.

After the Scott Act came into force the people of Exeter and area did not suddenly stop their consumption of spirits and turn solely to sarsparilla and tea. Exeter's constables Creech and Gill were kept busy raiding the hotels and private homes. Scott Act trials were common as hotelkeepers Hawkshaw, Oke, Brimacombe and others were brought to trial on charges of selling spiritous beverages. The frequent results was dismissal of the case since the witnesses swore that their host had served them no intoxicating drinks. Convictions were fewer than dismissals. In one raid in November 1885 Constable Creech impounded a bottle of spirits found in one of the stables of one of the hotels. The hostler complained bitterly that it was his medicine prescribed for leg pains by one of the veterinarians of the village. So people despite the Act continued to drink. The defenders of the Scott Act said that certainly

"there would be drunks around since the
liquor dealers deliberately made men
drunk and sent them into the street
to show the uselessness of the Act"

Besides it was noted that brandy could be made from wet saw dust and "what chance has prohibition got when a man can go forth with a rip saw and get drunk on a rail fence"

The raids continued in town and out. In Hensall Mr. B's driving shed was raided and the constables impounded 24 gallons of beer and 10 quarts of whiskey. Mr. B said it was vinegar so the constables had to obviously sample the contents to be sure it was not whiskey. It is not recorded whether or not the constables needed assistance home. In another raid four constables raided Mr. C. E.'s pig pen and upon tearing up the flooring found over 400 gallons of whiskey. "The pig pen was inhabited by 8 pigs." The gentleman referred to as C. E. was himself a county constable and bailiff.

Clearly the Scott Act was not satisfactory. There was continued pressure for its repeal. The Exeter Advocate was strongly in favour of repealing the Act. Mr. Sanders the editor pointed out that

1. The Act was unenforceable.
2. It injured respectable hotels and drew men to "low places"
3. It encouraged bad whiskey
4. It was "a tyranny without parallel in British Law"
5. It was anti-Christian
6. "Neither science nor scripture says that it is wrong to use liquor if it is not abused"
7. It punishes the seller instead of the drunkard
8. It encouraged a flourishing bootleg trade.
9. The Drunkard would be reformed only by other means, not the Scott Act

The pressure for repeal grew and on April 19, 1888 the County voted to repeal the Act by a 1300 majority. After three years, then, the Scott Act was out and "The Union Jack was hoisted over all of the hotels in Exeter. British freedom and justice" had prevailed. Huron then came under the Crooks Act. This provided for the licensing of hotels and shops. In Exeter five hotels — the Central (Acheson), the Exeter North (S. L. Walper) the Commercial (Hawkshaw) the Mansion House (Brimacombe) and the Metropolitan (Orme) were licensed. Two stores were licensed, Farmer Bros and S. C. Hersey (later bought out by F. J. Knight). By 1899 the saloon was abolished in Ontario and only hotels could be licensed. In Exeter the five hotels and the two stores continued to be licensed although around the turn of the century the Exeter North Hotel became a Temperance House leaving four licensed hotels which continued to operate until about 1915.

The Temperance Lodges continued to exist but by the early 1900's only the W.C.T.U., the Huron County Temperance Convention and the United Temperance Association seemed to exist in Exeter. The W.C.T.U. not only assaulted the liquor trade but also turned its attention to cigarettes. Mrs. E. J. Spackman a local leader of the W.C.T.U. in the early 1900's said cigarettes were "heart wreckers" and "brain and soul wreckers". The Times had articles periodically attacking the triple threat — cigarettes, whiskey and gambling. For example, in the February 8, 1900 issue was found:

> "Every boy of 12 or over knows that the confirmed cigarette smoker of tender years is on the road to the lunatic asylum or the grave.
> "Drink before 20 — by 40 a filthy drunken tramp.
> "Gambling leads to utter moral ruin"

The Advocate carried in January 1900 the following item:

> "Those who smoke cigarettes should read and ponder the following. David Hurley of Paris, Ontario 19 years old died from the effects of cigarette smoking. His father said the boy smoked $5.00 worth of cigarettes a week. He had shrivelled up until he looked like an old man. His lungs were in bad shape and his blood very thin. The physician opened the boy's arm and found that the main artery did not con

tain a drop of blood. It had all dried up. The father requested that the case be made public to serve as a warning to other boys.'

The local WCTU cited 3 cases of murder committed by teenagers in Toronto and Hamilton. All three of the teenagers smoked. Smoking clearly had contributed to their moral decline to the point where they committed murder. Cigarettes were legally sold in Exeter only in the hotels at one time. They were, however, available in some of the stores. One Exeter Old Boy reported that cigarettes "were kept in a drawer under the counter . . . if the store keeper knew the customer well he reached down and sold the cigarettes." In 1901 there was a charge of $30 for a license to sell cigarettes.

The WCTU also complained bitterly about spitting on the sidewalks. Council in 1903 granted the Ladies use of the reading rooms from whence could come their periodic pronouncements.

The hotel keepers in Exeter suffered the final blow in 1915. On May 1, 1915 the Canada Temperance Act came into effect in Huron. On April 30 the Central Hotel Bar closed at six o'clock, that hostelry having sold out its entire stock of liquors. The Commercial was open during the evening and quite a number took advantage of the last opportunity "around the open bar." That was the end of legal drinking in hotels in Exeter. The bars never opened again. Various laws were passed in Ontario but Huron continued under the Canada Temperance Act. In 1921 Ontario voted for the prohibition of intoxicating liquors being imported into Ontario.

In the referendum Exeter voted 695 to 136 for prohibition. Most of the village's clergy were ecstatic. The Rev. M. J. Wilson said, "Thank God, thank God . . . we have laid the foundation for civilizing, Canadianizing and Christianizing the incoming foreigner." The Rev. Mr. Foote's public statement was intoxicating in its verbosity and length but he concluded with "verily, we have witnessed a great triumph for righteousness." Only the Anglican rector, the Rev. Mr. Trumper was realistic. He said he did not believe in prohibition, that it was unworkable, unnecessary and he felt that the results would be far from satisfactory. The Rev. W. G. McAlister said that the vote would "gladden the patriotic heart of British Canadians." He suggested only "foreigners" would vote against the legislation. The Loyal Temperance Legion made up of 63 children gave praise in the Main Street Methodist Church.

Temperance people held meetings throughout the 1920's. International temperance delegates came to Exeter to view the success of the Temperance movement in Western Ontario. W. D. Sanders, W. G. Medd, H. E. Huston, the clergy and others staged a banquet and rally.

During this period of absolute prohibition in Ontario in the

early 1920's, W. A. Balkwill was Exeter's Prohibition Constable. On one occasion, Constable Balkwill arrested two men driving a "powerful Paige car" laden with whiskey near Woodham. Balkwill had little trouble since the men were so drunk that they had run the car into a ditch. He impounded over 200 bottles of whiskey. On another occasion a large "eight cylinder Cadillac car" had tire trouble on the Thames road. The occupants were seen to bury some cases in a nearby field. The cases contained whiskey, which was seized but the men escaped. An odd case came to light in 1922 near Dungannon. A burial, supposedly of a corpse from the steamer Greyhound, was about to take place when it was discovered that the coffin was full of whiskey. The undertaker and the minister were totally surprised — so they said.

In the mid 1920's Ontario ended its attempt at prohibition but Exeter remained dry since it was governed by the Canada Temperance Act. The situation was confused in Huron until 1946 when the Privy Council in London, England declared the C.T.A. to be valid in Huron, Perth, Peel and Manitoulin Island. Any liquor licenses in Huron were to be cancelled. There were none in Exeter. S. M. Sanders and the Main Street Church both urged that all liquor licenses be withdrawn. In a letter to the Times-Advocate Sanders said "abolish the beverage room completely and be done with that blight and curse to humanity". He was concerned with the "abhorrent women's beer parlors" and he felt our "brave soldiers" just returned would object to the country tolerating "such dens of vice".

The Huron County Temperance Federation was concerned that booze was being brought into the county by truck. The Federation commented on Seaforth's drinking habits and the "express traffic in liquor" into Exeter and Seaforth. Wingham was "one of the best towns — for drinking" but Clinton was "as clean as possible" but, tut, tut, there was "considerable private drinking". All in all, Huron was the banner Temperance County. The Federation felt that teachers should be "total abstainers". At one point the M.L.A. for Huron, W. G. Medd, expressed the opinion "that persons who have liquor permits should not be given permits to drive automobiles". So Huron had its public expressions of temperance for years.

As a side note it is humorous to note that the W.C.T.U., being ever watchful, had occasion in the 1930's to petition Council against poolrooms. The Village had a by-law against poolrooms but John Taylor operated one and he was taken to court. Later on it was decided that the bylaw was illegal. However, the W.C.T.U. said that "a poolroom is a curse to any town. It is there that the police always go when searching for criminals." "Poolrooms" said the ladies, "are the worst hell holes any town can possess" and they said "it is a well known fact that liquor is often sold in these resorts". Besides "gambling is associated with playing pool". The letter to Council was signed by Bessie H., Myrtle C., and Ella W. Fifty and sixty years ago, in order to play pool the "boys" would often skip school and go to Hensall to play.

In the 1950's efforts began to have the Canada Temperance Act repealed. In 1951 Reeves Cochrane of Exeter and Silk of Seaforth moved in County Council to seek its repeal. It was not, however, until 1959 that the vote to decide whether or not to repeal the Act was held. There was a good campaign in Exeter with the clergy, the Huron Temperance Federation and Bob Southcott leading the forces favouring the retention of the Canada Temperance Act. In print, at least, Don Southcott led the forces favouring repeal. "Democracy" said Donald, "permits the freedom to disagree even with the clergy". The temperance forces said that Huron "has a proud record of sobriety" and only the greed of the liquor interests would be served by repealing the Canada Temperance Act. But it was apparent that the Act had outlived its usefulness, if it ever had any. Elmer Bell took a bottle of liquor to church once to show that nothing could be done about possession and consumption of alcohol any place. Huron voted 12,157 to 7,391 for repeal. Exeter voted 763 to 480 for repeal.

A Brewers' Retail store and an Ontario Liquor Control Board store soon opened in Exeter but still there could be no restoration of hotels or beverage rooms. In 1963 Exeter held a liquor vote and the questions were all defeated but in the late 1960's another vote was held and Exeter did vote yes for certain types of outlets.

Exeter then lost the color which the presence of wet hotels lent to a small community over 50 years ago. Exeter has had an ambivalent attitude toward drinking. Its citizens probably did not drink any less than citizens of other small towns. They did, however, much less public drinking.

This chapter has dealt with the hotels and with drinking and other so-called vices. As an appendix to the chapter, By-law No. one, 1875 of the Village of Exeter is included to illustrate the village fathers' efforts at limiting or controlling "sin".

1875 By Law No. One 1875

To make provision for the prevention of nuisances and immoralities within the Village of Exeter

The Council of the Corporation of the Village of Exeter enacts as follows

1 It shall not be lawful for any person or persons whatever to do any or either of the following on the Sabbath, or Lord's day

subject to the penalty hereinafter imposed.

1st To sell or expose for sale, or to purchase, trade, or barter any wares, merchandizes, goods, chattels, or personal property whatsoever

2nd To do worldly labour, business or work, with the exception of works of necessity or charity, conveying travellers and the mails, and selling drugs or medicines,

3rd To play at marbles, quoits, cricket, ball, skittles, rackets, or any other noisy game, or to gamble with cards, dice or otherwise,

4th To run races on foot or horseback, carriages or vehicles of any kind

5th To dance or play any profane music to the annoyance of any person

II It shall be unlawful for any person or persons on any day, to do any of the following subject to the penalties hereinafter imposed

1st To sell or give away any spirits or intoxicating drinks of any kind to any child or apprentice, servant, idiot or insane person, without the consent of the parent, master, legal protector or physician of such child or person

2nd To openly expose, or exhibit, in any street, road, highway, or public place, within the said village of Exeter, any indecent object, or openly or indecently to expose his or her person in any street, road, highway or public place within the said village or to put up any indecent placard, writing or picture, or paint, write or inscribe any indecent word or words, or make any indecent picture or pictures on any wall, fence, tree or building, or sidewalk, or wilfully expose in view in any street, road, highway or public place within the said Village of Exeter any obscene painting or indecent exhibition

3rd To utter any profane oath or oaths or any obscene, indecent, blasphemous or grossly insulting language, or to practice any other immorality or indecency in any of the streets, roads, highways or public places within the said village.

4th To keep or maintain or to be an inmate of any bawdy House, for the resort and commerce of lewd or dissolute people, or the practice of fornication, or a house where lewdness, indecencies, or other grossly immoral or scandalous actions are purposely permitted or allowed, or shall knowingly permit or suffer his or her house to be used as a bawdy house, brothel or house of ill fame.

5th For any common prostitute or night walker to walk in any

street, road, highway or other public place within the said village.

6th To gamble and win or lose any money, liquor, or any other valuable thing or things, in playing at cards, dice or other game of chance, in any tavern or public place in the said village, or use any subtle means, craft or device, to deceive or impose upon any of Her Majesties subjects

7th To be found drunk or disorderly in any of the streets, highways or public places within the said village, or to wander about and lodge in any house or outhouse, or any deserted or unoccupied building, or in the open air or in tents or in any cart or wagon not having any visible means of support, and not giving a satisfactory account of him, her or themselves,

8th To race, or drive furiously any horse or other animal, either by itself, or attached to a carriage or vehicle of any kind on any of the streets, roads, highways, or public places within the said village

9th To drive, ride, or lead, any horse or other beast of burden on any of the sidewalks within the said village.

10th To keep or permit to be used in any building or place within the said village, used occupied or controlled by such person, any Faro Bank Roulette table, or other device for gambling whereon or with which, money, liquor, or any other articles shall be played for and in addition to the penalty hereinafter imposed, the said Faro Bank Roulette tables or other device for gambling, shall be seized and destroyed by the Officer or Constable authorized by the Convicting Justice or Justices.

11th To bathe or indecently expose his or her person by washing in any water lying or running near any public highway or dwelling house, between the hours of six in the morning and eight o clock in the evening unless provided with and clothed in a proper bathing dress, sufficient to prevent any indecent exposure of the person

12th To keep or harbour any dog or dogs dangerous in their nature to man or beast, or any dog or dogs that shall annoy the neighbourhood by barking, howling, or biting or shall in any way excite terror or alarm by running at, barking biting or snapping at any person or team or beast passing or repassing the thoroughfares within the said village.

13th For the owner or person in charge of any stroet to allow or permit the trying or covering of any mare or mares, unless in some enclosed place out of public view

14th To obstruct any of the streets or sidewalks of the said village

of Exeter with any commodity other than building material or material for the making or repairing of the sidewalks streets or bridges in the said village save and except loading or unloading goods and chattles in ordinary trade or commerce

III And be it further enacted That any person or persons who shall be guilty of any infraction or breach of any of the provisions of this By Law shall on conviction by any one or more of Her Majesties Justices of the Peace, having jurisdiction in the County of Huron, forfeit and pay for each and every such offence a price of not less than one dollar nor more than twenty dollars in the discretion of the Justice or Justices convicting together with the costs of prosecution and in default of payment thereof at such time as the said Justice or Justices shall direct the said penalty and costs shall be collected by distress and sale of the goods and chattels of the offender or offenders and in case of there not being sufficient distress found out of which the same can be made such offender or offenders shall be imprisoned in the County Gaol or Common Lock up house with or without hard labour for such a period not exceeding twenty-one days as the Justice or Justices convicting shall adjudge unless such fine and costs shall be sooner paid And in the event of the said fine or penalty being received by the said Justice or Justices, they shall pay the same over to the Treasurer of the Corporation of the Village of Exeter

IV And be it further enacted That it shall be lawful for any Constable or Peace Officer having jurisdiction in the County of Huron to apprehend any person or persons whom he shall observe committing any offense punishable under this By-Law who shall be unknown to such Constable or Peace Officer or who shall refuse to give his name or address, or shall give a false name or address, or one which such Constable or Peace Officer shall have reasonable cause to believe to be false, and to take such offender or cause him or her to be taken before the nearest Justice of the Peace having jurisdiction in the matter to be dealt with according to Law

V And be it further enacted that By-Laws No 15-1873 and No 11 1874 be and is hereby repealed and that this By-Law shall take effect on and after the passing thereof

Passed February 8th 1875
JM Eacrett
Vill Clerk

George Willis
Reeve

chapter 4

Transportation

Dobbin remains for man the
very kingpin of his prosperity

Exeter Times Advocate

"The normal town horse produced between fifteen and
thirty pounds of manure a day with
the average being something like 22 pounds"

"The evidence of the horse was everywhere —
in the piles of manure that littered the streets
attracting swarms of flies and creating stench
in the iron rings and hitching posts   in the
numerous livery stables that gave off a mingled
smell of horse urine and manure harness oil and hay

In early Ontario we find, for the first time in Canada a system of roads being developed almost as soon as settlement began It was a system which was planned in its broad outlines from the start In Huron County as well as the rest of the Huron Tract a road system had been planned by the Canada Company It is true that the roads were not very good when the first settlers moved over them and it is also true that some settlers had to clear a roadway through the bush themselves before reaching their selected site for homesteading. Indeed, roads were not very good for a long time after the early settlers came. Nevertheless, there were roads to the outside world. The Huron Road and the London Road were the two principal arteries running into Huron.

The south part of Huron County depended entirely on roads for contact with the rest of the province. There were no navigable waterways in South Huron; consequently, land travel was the only means available. Travel was somewhat easier in the winter than at other seasons and it was noted earlier that James Willis and some of the other early settlers had travelled into the region during the winter. The early roads were little more than tracks and were more easily traversed by sleigh in winter than by cart at times in the other seasons.

The story of the early pioneer road building period and of the problems of early travel is well known and cannot be recounted here. It is enough for our purposes to comment that road construction through the Upper Canadian woods was arduous to say the least. It was hard, exhausting work. Fever and ague frequently struck, decimating work crews, and deaths were not uncommon. Whiskey was another problem that the road gang supervisors also had to deal with; stories of road crews prostrate from too much whiskey consumption are common. Once the actual clearing had been done the road was still little more than a stump-covered track. It required many years in most areas before the roads were any more than rough trails.

As far as the settlers in the Exeter area were concerned the main road and chief link with the outside world was the London Road. This road had been opened by the Canada Company from London to Goderich in 1832. The road was not logged or stumped for several years but settlers like Willis came up the road almost immediately. As was noted previously, McConnell was assigned to live at the half way point between Goderich and London and assume responsibility, on behalf of the Canada Company, for supervision of the road between Clandeboye (Flanagan's Corners) and Clinton. This half-way point, of course, eventually became Exeter. The London Road was the Canada Company's second main road into the region, the first being the famous Huron Road from Guelph to Goderich. The Huron Road had been blazed in 1827. Roads like these cost in the area of 265 pounds per mile by the time that they had been logged and stumped. In 1841 control of all but the most important roads was transferred to the district councils by the province. With the passage of the Baldwin Act in 1849 county and township councils were made responsible for roads.

The London Road, then, was Exeter's main communications link with the rest of Canada. That part of the London Road from London to Elginfield through London Township was known as the Proof Line and had been surveyed in 1824 by Francis Kilbourne. This section of road was purchased by a private road company perhaps about 1840, and this company, known as The Proof Line Company, erected three or four toll gates along the road. The toll was ten cents at each gate. In 1850 Middlesex County tried to purchase the road but the price was too high. Middlesex abolished tolls on all of its roads in 1882 but the Proof Line Company continued to operate until 1907 when the road was finally purchased by the County. The section of the London Road in Huron County was significantly improved after it was assumed by the County of Huron although tolls existed on the road in Huron until 1873. There are not many sources of information regarding the tolls in this part of Huron. There are indications, however, of a toll gate existing at Devon; the toll keeper at that gate was a Mr. Henry Harris who died in Exeter in 1903. Other toll keepers in the area included John Potts, also at Devon, who lived in Exeter in the 1850's and William Taylor who also lived in Exeter. The location of the gate kept by the last named man is not known. Not much is known about the toll gates in the South Huron area but it is safe to assume that they would not have been any more popular here than they were elsewhere. Incidents involving toll keepers were common. For example, there is a record of a toll keeper in Bruce County being sent to jail for over-charging. Farmers burned another gate near Dungannon. In 1873 the County of Huron abolished all tolls in the county and in the same year purchased the Northern Gravel Road Company, a road from Goderich to Lucknow, a distance of twenty-two miles. This road was the last private road in the county.

In the Exeter area road maintenance and construction was the responsibility of the councils of the surrounding townships. Township minutes are filled with references to roads and ancillary works. One of the earliest such references is found in the minutes of the United Townships of Stephen, Usborne and Hay. On December 15, 1842 there is the following entry:

> Received in London from Mr. Harris, Treasurer of the London District, a cheque upon the Bank of Upper Canada for the sum of £17 11s.0d. for the roads and public works in the Townships of Stephen, Usborne and Hay.[14]

The money was handed over on December 23 by Township Clerk George Snell to William McConnell the District Councillor. On January 9, 1842, the same sum was given by McConnell to Hugh Balkwill the new clerk. Presumably after all this movement

the seventeen pounds was eventually used to improve the roads.

Much of the work done on the roads in rural Upper Canada was performed by statute labour. This compulsory work on roads and bridges had been provided for in Upper Canada as early as 1793. In the Highway Act of that year it was mandatory for each man to provide up to twelve days a year labour. A few years later the statute labour requirement was changed and made proportional to the assessed value of the property. This system of statute labour "was devised to meet the requirements of early settlements when a simultaneous opening of all the roads in a township was the thing most desirable. Its chief advantages were that under its working each ratepayer was permitted to do his share of the road building in his immediate neighbourhood and that he was able to pay his road tax in labour."

It is worth noting one or two details about statute labour in Usborne Township. The items selected are from By-law No. 6, 1854, Township of Usborne.

> "It shall be the duty of each overseer of highways ... to cause all Statute Labour within his division to be performed between the first day of June and the twenty-fourth of July ..."
>
> "That any person liable to perform statute labour may compound for such duty if he or she shall think fit on or before the first Monday in May by paying to the Township Treasurer the sum of 2/6d. for each day ..."
>
> "Every person liable to perform Statute Labour shall ... be obliged ... to work faithfully and diligently ... and shall bring with him such tools as he ... be directed by the overseer to bring ... allowing eight hours to each day's work."
>
> "... a day's work of a team and driver shall be reckoned equivalent to two days' personal labour of one man."
>
> "... and it shall also be the duty of the overseer to call upon any person of the age of 21 years and upwards ... to perform 2 days Statute Labour although his name may not be on the assessment roll."

The by-law went on to provide for a fine of 5 shillings per day for neglect of the statute labour obligation. In 1857 the labour could be commuted for the sum of one dollar per day. It was compulsory for town dwellers to pay the commutation fee. Presumably the residents of the little village of Exeter who lived on the Usborne side would pay James Pickard or Hugh Bulkwill, the pathmasters in the area, the commutation fee. Stephen residents would pay their pathmaster. These funds had to be expended by the pathmaster on the roads in his beat. Presumably the few village streets would be maintained by statute labour although it is not clear how the townships handled Exeter's streets in the early years. After the village was incorporated the village council hired men for street work but prior to incorporation street work was the responsibility of the township concerned.

The same by-law mentioned above included a section "to prevent horse racing on the public highway" and provided a fine for offenders of 50 shillings. There were township regulations regarding the removal of fallen trees from the road, the cutting of timber for twenty-five feet on each side of the road. In the latter regulation trees in orchards or "any tree planted expressly for ornament or shelter shall be exempt". There were no directions to the Pathmaster to help him decide whether a tree was an ornament or a nuisance. Statute labour was gradually abolished in Ontario with Malden Township in Essex County being the first to end the system. Usborne Township abolished Statute labour in the late 1920's.

Road work was probably the chief concern of township councils. There is little information about the construction of the Lake Road or Thames Road but this road, now Highway 83, was probably built in the 1840's. There is some indication that the Lake Road was opened in 1839. The Exeter area was becoming sufficiently important by 1857 and 1858 for consideration to be given to road improvement to St. Marys. In January, 1858 agreement was reached between Usborne Township and the County of Huron and Bruce for the expenditure of $20,000 to grade and gravel nine miles "more or less" of road leading from the Village of Exeter to the Head of the Base Line of the Township of Blanshard — this would be at Woodham. If the cost exceeded $20,000 the township was to pay the excess. The price was to include culverts, toll gates, bridges and other ancillary items. The County was to "have full jurisdiction over the said road through Usborne ... and shall have the power of letting the tolls thereon." The County of Perth was expected to gravel from St. Marys to Woodham. This road would be the present St. Marys road over much of its length; the county directed that the road run straight from the first to the eleventh Concession between lots 10 and 11. The St. Marys and Exeter Gravel Road Company and the Gravel Road Company of Blanshard were somehow involved with this construction. These were probably joint stock companies such as those that existed all over Upper Canada at this time. Such companies were permitted to build roads and to charge for their use. Municipalities often held shares in such companies. The involvement in this project of the two companies mentioned, however, is not clear.

During these years from the early 1830's to the late 1850's the roads were gradually improved from sleigh tracks dotted with stumps, to mud and corduroy roads and finally on the main roads at least, to gravel. At first travel over the early roads in the Exeter area was either by foot, by oxcart or by "jumper". Jumpers were home-made sleighs. The "runners were unshod" and the conveyance was used mainly over grass or rough ground and, of course, over the snow in winter. Ox carts were used almost exclusively from the early 1830's to the 1850's. James Handford remarked that "some men had from sixty to eighty acres cleared before they bought a wagon". The first team and wagon in the area was owned by the Case family who settled north of Exeter. The teams and wagons replaced the oxen over the next few decades and horses became the principal draught animals. Of course, in the early years, people walked a good deal too. Jim Handford recalled a trip he made to London with his uncle Jack Bissett in the 1840's. They walked to London taking one and one half days to go. We mentioned earlier how Willis had walked to London. Farmers would commonly walk to the local grist mills carrying sacks of grain.

After settlement had thickened and roads had been sufficiently improved regular stage coach service became possible. Coaches at first were farm wagons with hard seats and no springs; by the 1840's and 1850's the coaches became somewhat more luxurious. Many were painted in gaudy colours; many had glass windows, curtains, and soft cushioned seats; they carried from nine to sixteen persons. The Concord stage, built in New Hampshire was a famous make of coach at this time. Their speed was varied depending on the road but average speed was eight to ten miles per hour. Horses were changed every fifteen miles at the numerous inns along the roads. The inns of this area like the rest of Upper Canada were often scenes of "wholesale brawling and drinking". South of Exeter there were many inns including Quick's Black Horse Inn and Balkwill's Tavern.

The stage coach provided the Exeter area with its most rapid transportation connection to the outside world. Stage service evolved in the area gradually. The Canada Company provided irregular service over the Huron Road but it was the mid 1840's before regular stage service existed along the Huron Road to Goderich. Regular service on the London Road probably did not exist before the late 1850's although some stage service was provided in the early 1850's. Some of the early drivers included Jack Quick and William Geary. Drivers were romantic figures in those days but often were hard drinking, tough characters. Drunken drivers became "at times a menace to the travelling public". They were paid ten to twelve dollars per month. One traveller in 1856 noted that Exeter was "neatly built up" but travel up the London Road in 1856 was still far from good especially north of Elginfield. The Proof Line to Elginfield was good but the road apparently deteriorated north of that point. The fare to London in the 1850's was fifty cents return "over the most terrible roads, and passengers had frequently to get out and walk", said John Stanlake who in 1924 at the age of eighty reminisced about the early days. The roads gradually improved, however, and so did the coaches. By the 1860's and 1870's there were a number of stage lines operating in the area. For example, out of Lucan were lines run by F. R. Jennings, S. S. Armitage and, of course, the famous Donnellys. Out of Exeter, "Hawkshaw's Stages", advertised as "The Favorite", served the travelling public with "the fastest and most comfortable stages in the province". John Hawkshaw said he offered "good horses, comfortable stages, and the most accommodating drivers". Hawkshaw's chief driver was William Brooks who was killed in an accident in 1875. The description of the accident is given below since in this one incident it is possible to illustrate so many aspects of stage coach travel. The description is from the "Exeter Times".

> "On Friday morning last, Mr. Wm. Brooks ... left Exeter at 4 a.m., the usual hour, having quite a number of passengers. ...All went well until nearing London, and going down the hill at Mt. Hope, when Donnelly's opposition stage attempted to pass. Brooks then whipped up his horses, and they sped along at a rapid rate and hurried their driver to destruction. ...The nut of the left fore wheel came off and the [illegible] axle fell to the ground. Brooks was then dashed to the earth and ... struck the whiffletree while falling.

Dave Johns was on the stage with seven other passengers. He explained that the passengers "tumbled out along the road". The horses were caught by a passer-by and Mr. Cobbledick carried Brooks to the city where three doctors, Hagerty, McKenzie and Bratton tried to save the "poor man's life". Evidently, the stage which turned and backed several times while at Lucan, had the nuts loosened, and the rapid motion given the wheels, while going down the hill, hurtled them off. Once before Brooks had experienced the loss of the wheel nuts when they had been removed maliciously.

This deliberate tampering with the stage coaches was evidently not uncommon. Once in the summer of 1873 Hawkshaw had two stages waiting at the Britannia Hotel (possibly the Royal Hotel) to take people to the Barnum show that was in town. Mr. Hawkshaw had left them there over Sunday night and on Monday morning the wheels came off both stages as they headed towards the grounds where the show was located. Hawkshaw offered one hundred dollars reward for information leading to the arrest of the culprits who had removed the nuts. It could have been a competitor or it may have been some boys simply up to mischief. In 1875 Crawley and Flannigan's London stage was set on fire in front of the Mansion House in Exeter. This was another example of the unscrupulous behaviour of some of the competing lines.

In the early 1870's the stage time from Exeter to London was 4 a.m. with arrival in London at 9 a.m. The coach left London for Ex eter at 2 p.m. and reached Exeter at 7 p.m. This was a daily service. There was also a daily stage for Clinton leaving at 5 a.m. and reaching Clinton at 10 a.m. The return stage left at 2:30 p.m. and reached Exeter at 5:30 p.m. The round trip ticket for London was $1.50, the price was the same for Clinton. There was a stage for St. Marys leaving at 6 a.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

The road was also carried by stage coach with Rattenbury of Clinton being the first to carry the Royal Mail on the London Road from Goderich to London and back. Other mail coaches carried the mail east and west. Some of the drivers on the Exeter to St. Marys run were Ted Davis and James Shoebottom. Shoebottom was also the proprietor of a tavern. On one occasion Jim Shoebottom was late getting into Woodham. After a time the stage came up to Woodham post office "driverless". Searchers soon found Jim dazedly wending his way toward the village.

> According to his story he had been held up by highwaymen; the horses he said took fright at the shooting. Jim claimed he got the better of the bandits after he succeeded in wresting a revolver away from one of them but when asked to produce the gun the best he could show was a pocket flask nearly empty.

It was said that 'some were uncharitable enough to blame John Barleycorn for the holdup.'

After the opening of the railway in late 1875 the passenger stages and mail stages that had operated the north-south runs along the London Road were obsolete. The railway took over this function but mail, freight and passengers continued to be hauled by stage and wagon on the east west roads from Exeter until the coming of the motor vehicle.

Henry Guenther was one of the later stage operators. He met the morning and evening train in Exeter. He charged fifty cents for the stage trip from Exeter to Grand Bend. He also called at the hotels. Guenther's stages ran from Exeter to Dashwood, Grand Bend, Parkhill and so on. Henry died in 1913 leaving his son Earl to run the operation which grew into a large school bus and transport operation. The Guenther transport line with twenty-one trucks amalgamated with the Teekay line of nine trucks in 1952. Earl Guenther still operates the school bus line known as Exeter Coach Lines. So both Guenther Teekay transport and Exeter Coach Lines are direct descendants of Henry Guenther's stage lines.

In 1899 the Dashwood - Exeter stage was run by P. McIsaac who had the mail contract. He also carried passengers and freight. Henry Huffman also ran a stage from Exeter to Grand Bend in the years before and after World War One. There was some stage service on the London road too. "Cap" Howard operated a stage line between London and Lucan long after the railroad came. Howard

had succeeded "Long John" Hodgins. It would appear, however, that Hawkshaw's line did not run much after 1876 and the coming of the railway.

The railway came to Exeter in late 1875 and so began a new era in the history of the village. The railway, with its rapid movement of large numbers of people and great quantities of freight was the symbol of nineteenth century technological progress. The citizens of Exeter believed in progress which was the style of their times and it was going to be many decades later before voices questioned the whole idea of progress and the value of technological achievements. The black smoke and the wail of the locomotive symbolized the greatness of human achievement in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The first train, a twenty-six freight train, passed through Exeter from London on a Friday morning, December 11, 1875. This was the culmination of work which had begun in 1871, when gentlemen like John Carling, C. P. Smith, G. Birrell, William Glass, Alex Johnston and Isaac Carling formed the London, Huron and Bruce Railway Company to promote construction of a line from London to Wingham. The London, Huron and Bruce Railway Company was incorporated on February 15, 1871 with a capital stock of $104,250. After many difficulties and deals the Directors of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway in 1874 entered an agreement with the Great Western Railway of Canada. The Great Western would construct and lease the London, Huron and Bruce Railway. The Directors had worked "indefatigably" and had overcome "obstacle on obstacle" to "accomplish this great desideratum". Much of their work had consisted of getting finances. The Government of Ontario was to grant $2,000 per mile but granted a total of $178,630 and each municipality on the line made a grant. London granted $100,000. It was felt that London needed to "obtain intercourse by railway connections with the northern country". Usborne granted $25,000, Stephen $10,000, and Exeter according to By-law No. 11, July 21, 1873 and a subsequent vote of the people granted $10,000 to the railway. The incorporation of the Village of Exeter was brought about partly at least so that another municipality would exist on the line to grant a subsidy to the railroad. Indeed all of the municipalities to be served by the line subsidized the construction to the total extent of $311,300. The Great Western Railway for some time resisted the idea of building the line to Wingham; the Great Western Board wanted to stop at Blyth. There was concern that the London, Huron and Bruce would adversely affect the trade of the Wellington, Grey and Bruce line which already had been built to Wingham. However the Great Western Railway finally agreed to construct the "line of sixty-nine miles, extending from London Junction (Hyde Park), on the main line in a northerly direction to Wingham a station on the Wellington Grey and Bruce Railway. The Great Western Railway was to "receive the municipal bonuses and the Government subsidy granted in aid of its construction. The Great Western Railway shareholders were largely in Britain and the Great Western agent who dealt with the London Huron and Bruce was a Mr Childers. The total cost of construction to the Great Western was "between 160,000 and 170 000 pounds".

Exeter was the most important town on the London Huron and Bruce Railway and when the Grand Opening was held in London on January 20 1876 there were more people there from Exeter than from any other municipality on the line. Perhaps the large delegation was due to the importance of Exeter. Perhaps the Times was right when it remarked "Enterprising Exeter the hustlers for trade". Perhaps it was the free booze who knows now. In any case, when the train which had been dispatched by the Great Western Railway from London to Wingham to pick up the guests almost fifty of Exeter's leading citizens boarded the train. The train left Wingham Tuesday morning and the following description appeared in the Times.

> "On Tuesday morning after the arrival of the early train from Kincardine which had on board a number of prominent men of the town who joined the train at Wingham the iron horse was loosed, and down, down through the country over hills and through vales past beautiful farms swept the speeding train. Leaving Belgrave which promises to be an important point we sped on until we reached Blyth Londesboro Clinton Brucefield Kippen Hensall stations were left behind and Exeter reached. If ever Exeter's cheeks grew red it was on that day for laudatory praises as to its beautiful surroundings, prominence and importance sprung from the lips of nearly all on board. The only hindrance to a perfect view of the village from the station is a small piece of woods which intercept the site; but we understand Mr Carling intends removing it. Eventually London was reached the trip was made in six hours."

Exeter's delegation is listed since it will provide a review of who some of the prominent men in town were in 1876. The list is as follows

D Johns
J Bell
S. Tait
R Davis
M M Rossbrugh
W H Verity
W Case
G Griffith
I Carling
J W Broderick
J Crannican
J Drew
W Drew
T Fitton
T Coates
W Grigg

A. Lewis
R. Manning
S. Hogarth
G. Mace
J. McIntyre
J. Acheson
J. Pickard
R. Pickard
C. Southcott
G. Sanders
S. Sanders
Stanley and Jermyn
G. Willis
J. Oke

A. Sacks
T. Lively
W. Hawkshaw
Dr. Hyndman
B. V. Elliott
G. Waldron
W. Tuitt
J. Treble
W. Fanson
J. Thorne
C. Eacrett
M. Eacrett
G. Eacrett
A. Skinner

These good gentlemen of the village with hundreds of others were welcomed to London "in right royal style". The "choicest of music discoursed by the 7th. Battalion Band which indisputably holds, as a band, one of the highest positions in Canada" was provided. "On the approach of the train a salute was fired ... by Major Peter's Battery of Artillery". London was gaily decorated. "Exclamations of surprise and ejaculations of wonder were emitted from the visitors". At 7 o'clock in the evening the banquet began in city hall which was tastefully decorated. The caterers, Conklin and Moore had "filled the tables with the choicest that the country could produce". The speeches and the evening went on and on. One remarkable feature was the endless number of toasts. By way of illustrating who was important, toasts were proposed to the following: Queen Victoria, The Prince of Wales, The Princess of Wales, The Army, The Navy and Volunteers, The Governor General, The Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, The Parliament of Canada, The Government of Ontario, Thomas Greenway, M.P. South Huron, Mr. Farrow, M.P., North Huron, Thomas Gibson M.P., East Huron. By this time the party was becoming noisy and Mr. Gibson sang The Red, White and Blue. But the toasts went on — Mr. Bishop, MPP, Success to the London, Huron and Bruce Railway, a silent toast to the Dead proposed by John Birrell, Prosperity to the Great Western Railroad, Mr. Broughton, General manager of the Great Western Railroad, the municipalities, the guests, the agricultural interests, the Mayor of London. The hall was getting so noisy by this time that no one was really listening to the toasts but still more were proposed — the commercial interests, the manufacturing interests, the Press, Huron County, Clandeboye (formerly Ireland and Flannigans Corners) newly named by the railroad in honor of the Earl of Dufferin and so on. It is not recorded what the gallonage for the party was but it must have been sub-

stantial with 650 guests drinking steadily throughout the evening. There were about thirty toasts which alone would drain great quantities.

So the railway was well christened in January 1876 although apparently there had been an earlier celebration in Exeter in late summer or fall of 1875 at the station when the two construction gangs, one from Wingham and the other from London met at Exeter where a gold spike was driven to complete the line.

As mentioned above a freight train made the initial run on December 11, 1875. The passenger service began in January 1876 and continued until 1956 when the last passenger car was removed. The freight service, however, still exists on the London, Huron and Bruce Railroad to Clinton but for most of the year now the service is a three times a week "road switcher service". In the past there were three trains a day up to Wingham and three trains a day back so the old London, Huron and Bruce Railroad, now run by the CNR has reduced service very considerably. In 1941 the service was discontinued from Clinton to Wingham. As long ago as 1917 the passenger service was being reduced. The London, Huron and Bruce Railroad had a history of prosperity from 1876 to the turn of the century but since then the story has been one of gradual decline.

In 1875, though, almost everyone regarded the railway as a great boon to increasing industry and business and it was true that places on the railway did acquire an impetus to growth while places that were not on the railway declined. Exeter had a period from 1876 to 1892 of very significant growth. The town doubled in population from about one thousand to a little over two thousand in those sixteen years. It was not entirely due to the railroad but the railroad did contribute. But not quite everyone welcomed the line. The telegraph poles which accompanied the line were cut down near Clandeboye and logs were placed over the tracks in Morris Township. But generally the people of Huron regarded the line as their rapid connection to the rest of the country.

The construction of the line through the village of Exeter occurred in the summer of 1875. Most of the right of way was acquired from Isaac Carling who owned much of the land on the west side of town. This property was known as "Carling's Bush". Mr. Carling undoubtedly profited from the line's construction and he had been one of the promoters. He was personally generous and is supposed to have donated the land to the railway. It is difficult to determine how the right of way through Exeter was decided. Mr. Carling was involved with the railway from the beginning and whether he influenced the decision to go through the west edge of Exeter by his donation of land is not really known but he no doubt did contribute to the decision to go up the edge of the village. In any

case, it has proven over the years a real value to the town to have had the line go through what was for years the edge of the village and not through the centre. Sidings to the plow works and to the Harvey Bros. flour mill were proposed but again the long term benefits have been greater because they were not built than the short run benefit would have been if they had been built.

The Exeter Station on the London, Huron & Bruce Railway. This station was located on the West side of the tracks at that time. This is probably the first station.

The first railway station in Exeter was built west of the tracks and further north than the present station. On the east side were grain storage sheds and storage sheds for peas; from the pea storage sheds the youngsters stole peas for their shooters. "Isn't it awful" remarked the Times. The facilities in Exeter erected in 1875 by the Great Western Railway included, then, a station and freight shed of frame construction 24 x 96 x 12½ in its dimensions. There was a timber platform of 2,176 sq. ft., a bus platform 9' x 15, a passenger platform 207 x 4½. In addition there was a closet 7 x 14 x 8, two stockpens 31 x 39' and 23 x 29. In 1878 a frame section house 24 x 32 x 12' was constructed. The first station agent was Charles Knight who was agent until 1900. In 1897 a frame water tank two stories high was erected at the station with a 19,030 imperial gallon capacity and more stock pens were added. In 1895 a pumphouse had been built to draw water from the river and a well. A new station was built in 1908 on the east side of the tracks. This depot was one of the handsomest on the line. On October 20, 191[illegible], the new station was burned. "The fire was discovered about two o'clock and the building was a mass of flames at that time, there being no possibility of saving anything. The fire brigade was early on the scene and did good work in saving the surroundings, among which were several cars, two, however, being partially burned — one containing potatoes and the other coal. A gun traveller, who had spent the previous day at the Dashwood shooting match, lost his supplies valued at $500. ... how the fire started is a mystery. There was no fire in the station at the time, and everything indicates that the fire was of incendiary origin." By this time the railway was under the Grand Trunk Railway's control and that company dispatched a car to Exeter for use by the station agent Mr. Knight.

The Present Station

During the construction of the railway employment was provided. The wages paid to construction workers were $1.25 per day; a man with his team earned $3.25 per day. A good deal of entertainment and amusement was given the populace of the village during the period when the railway was still a novelty. The novelty of the railway attracted the townsfolk and the Times was disturbed by the people who "desecrated the Sabbath" by putting a handcar on the track. The Times was more than disturbed, it was outraged. It was perfectly acceptable for people to take a walk, after church mind you, on a Sunday to have a look at the track but to actually put a handcar on the track and run up and down was shocking indeed. The Times said in September, 1875:

> "There can't be much objection raised to lovers of pleasure taking a stroll along the tracks but when handcars are allowed to run upon the tracks on the Sabbath Day we think this is going beyond pleasure and the authorities should put a stop to it. Last Sabbath there were four of these handcars upon the track. There is a law preventing the desecration of the Sabbath."

About the same time, in 1875 two Wingham boys were drown-

ed on a Sunday when their boat capsized. "Let that be a warning to ALL SABBATH BREAKERS" said the Times! The railway meant new business for Exeter as well. The American Express Company opened an office in 1876. A telegraph office was also opened. This was the Great Northwestern Telegraph Company which opened offices in Exeter in 1875. One of the offices was in the north end of town but closed shortly after it opened, the other office was in Sander's store. It was later moved to the Sander's house on Main Street where Mary Sanders was the operator until 1920 when the Great Northwestern Telegraph Company was taken over by the Canadian National Railway. The telegraph office was then moved to the station where it remained until 1936 when N. J. Dore retired. The telegraph business was carried on by Dore in his house at the corner of Victoria and William Streets until 1946. The office was then moved to Centralia where it was maintained until 1966 when the Canadian National Railways' centralization process resulted in the closing of this telegraph office. Telegraph service for Exeter is now provided by the London office. There is some mention of the Montreal Telegraph Company having an office in Exeter in 1871 but the evidence is unclear concerning this office.

The section men and station agent lived in Exeter and the businessmen and farmers could now ship out their goods more readily. In the first year of operation, in 1876, the Station Master in Exeter, Mr. Haydon, reported 9,342,742 pounds of freight forwarded and 4,686,661 pounds received. The station's revenue for freight and passenger service was $24,267.47 with almost $7,000 coming from passenger ticket sales. The London to Wingham time was three hours in 1876.

The line's profit from mid 1875 to January 1, 1876, i.e. the net revenue for the first six months operation was 371 pounds, 11 shillings.

On August 12, 1882 the Grand Trunk Railway and the Great Western Railway merged under the name Grand Trunk. Thus the London, Huron and Bruce Railway became a part of the Grand Trunk Railway system. It would appear that the operation of the London, Huron and Bruce after 1882 was not as efficient as it might have been. Complaints about the poor service and late trains appeared in the pages of the Times and the Advocate with increasing frequency. In addition to dissatisfaction with the service, Exeter was never very happy with the location of the station. The feeling was in the village that the station should have been located in the centre of the town. There was frequent talk about constructing a "belt line" into the centre of the village but this of course was never done. In 1919 the Government of Canada acquired the capital stock of the Grand Trunk Railway and in 1923 the Grand

Trunk was amalgamated with the Canadian National Railway system.

Over the years there were eight station agents assigned to Exeter. The first agent was Charles Knight who retired in 1899. He was succeeded by his son, John Knight who was transferred to Guelph in 1912. From 1912 to 1936 the agent was Norman J. Dore who had previously been a travelling auditor for the Grand Trunk Railway. Dore was followed by Oliver Martin who was moved to Harriston in 1940. Fred Forrester served until 1946. He was succeeded by Ernest Cerson who operated the station until 1962 when he retired. Cerson was followed by John McKee.

Over the years Exeter was considered to be "a very important station". In the early years a station staff of ten handled the incoming goods and the shipping of large volumes of agricultural products out of the area. We have mentioned elsewhere in the book how heavy the traffic was in agricultural commodities in the early years. By the mid 1930's both passenger and freight traffic began to decline on the line. In 1941 service was discontinued from Clinton to Wingham. In 1955 the train stopped carrying the Royal Mail and in 1956 passenger service was discontinued. The last passenger coach on the "butter and eggs special" was taken off on April 28, 1956. William Wright was the engineer, Les Blake the fireman and George Love the conductor for this last passenger run. Rail service on the old line is now very limited. The Exeter station has been closed and the services centralized in London.

Railways then were the major form of transportation for goods and people in and out of Exeter for many decades. There was always talk of expanding rail service. For example in 1909 the CPR proposed a line from St. Marys to Exeter, Goderich and Sarnia. The Council expressed interest but the idea gradually died. Great interest was shown in an electrified rail line from Exeter to St. Marys. A radial line from St. Joseph to various points near Exeter was proposed. Various other proposals including electrification of the London, Huron and Bruce were made during the period before World War One but none of the schemes materialized. People like B. W. F. Beavers, R. G. Seldon and the Harvey Bros. were strongly in favour of better rail service for Exeter but the war interfered with the schemes and after the war the additional railways seemed no longer so vital.

With the coming of the railway the stage lines were certainly reduced in number but the horses were not by any means reduced in importance. The horse continued to be the principal source of locomotion for most people for another fifty years and was not really eliminated from the farm and streets until after World War Two.

The horse was the basis of a way of life and the basis of a whole economic structure. Blacksmiths, veterinarians, harness makers, livery stable operators, dealers depended upon the horse and when the horse ceased to be a major form of transport these businesses disappeared.

Exeter had its share of these various businesses based upon the horse. We mentioned the stage lines and these continued to operate until the coming of the motor vehicle. In addition to the stage lines there were the transport services within the village as well. Probably the most well known was the omnibus service of John Andrew Gillespie who, with his son, operated a coach service in town from the 1870's until his death in 1921. He met the trains and carried passengers to the hotels or to their homes. At first both the Commercial and the Central Hotels had their own "busses" to meet the trains but Gillespie reached an agreement with Hawkshaw and Acheson and ran a bus for both. Mr. Gillespie was known to take the occasional drop of elixir and at times this caused him some difficulty. One of these times he was taking Mr. C. V. Pickard's grandmother from the station to her residence on John Street (now Ann Penhale's apartment house). He backed his rig into three houses before he let old Mrs. Pickard off at the right house. Having finally found the right house he tipped his hat and lurched away. Mrs. Pickard, a staunch Methodist and a strong Temperance advocate, never rode in Mr. Gillespie's conveyance again. Gillespie acquired a new bus in November 1903 "comfortably upholstered and up to date in every respect". He also operated a cartage and draying business with his son. When he died in 1921 after a long and colorful career on the village streets the Times reported that John Gillespie had finally "relinquished the reins and his spirit took its flight to that unknown world from which no traveller ever returns. The trip had no terrors for Mr. Gillespie for he was ready." In 1901 A. Cottle thought that he might provide some competition for Gillespie. Cottle in that year approached Council about the possibility of obtaining a ten year franchise for a street railway from the Mansion House to the Metro House and thence to the station. Nothing came of the scheme, however.

The livery barns were important businesses in the horse and buggy days. The livery man provided stable facilities for travellers; he rented horses and vehicles and generally provided service for the travelling public. The hotels all had livery stables of their own or had an agreement with one of the livery operators to serve the hotel. The Central Hotel had this latter arrangement. W. G. Bissett had a livery barn and poultry yard at the rear of the Central Hotel and provided the Hotel with stable facilities for the guests. Bissett opened his business about 1860 and operated it until 1911 when he sold out to George Crawley. Bissett died in 1941 shortly after he sold the livery business. He had been in business for over fifty years. He had served on council as councillor, reeve, and deputy-reeve for eighteen years. Bissett was a "staunch Conservative" and Methodist. The Advocate reported in his death notice that he was "impulsive at times, but a warm heart and manly spirit made him a man among men, and no man mingled more freely with all classes of his fellow citizens". He was certainly Exeter's oldest businessman at the time of his death.

Ed Christie operated a livery stable and provided the service for the Commercial Hotel. William Snell was another liveryman in the village. Thornton Baker had a livery barn on James Street across from what is now Russell's store. Baker used to drive "commercial travellers" on their rounds to the various stores. Salesmen would come in on the train and hire a horse and vehicle to take them around the country. Baker took them "around the horn" which was the run from Exeter to Centralia, Crediton, Grand Bend, Zurich, Hensall and back to Exeter. Another run was to Farquhar, Elimville, Winchelsea, Kirkton, Woodham. Baker's old livery barn was sold by Sandy Elliott to L. Hodge of Staffa who tore it down in 1943.

W. J. Beers Harness Shop about 1909
This shop stood where the Post Office is now located
Earl Clarkson Maurice Quance W. J. Beer

The harness maker was another tradesman whose livelihood was dependent upon the horse. The Eacretts, Charles and George had been one of the early harness makers and saddlers in Exeter. William Fenson owned another of the early harness shops in town. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century there were five harness making shops in the village. The shops were owned by Mr. John Treble whose location was in the area where the Bank of Montreal is now. Mr. Gilbert House and R. H. Sweet who sold out his boots, shoes and harness business in 1903 and migrated west. Sweet's shop was located south of Snell's garage on the Main Street. The other harness makers were W. J. Beer and Peter Frayne. W. J. Beer's shop had several locations. It was once located where the Post Office is now and later it was on the site of what is now Russell's store. Beer had learned his trade from Peter Frayne who was an institution on the Main Street for decades. Frayne was born in 1852 in Usborne Township; his parents were Robert and Margaret Frayne. He learned his trade in London and in 1876 he returned to Exeter to open his own shop. The building he occupied later became the P.U.C. building and then was acquired by C. Fairbairn. Peter Frayne married Mary Johnston in 1878 and the couple lived in a lean-to at the rear of the shop until he had saved enough to move to a house on Carling Street. As his business prospered he was able to build the house on Andrew Street later occupied by J. O. Stanbury. For forty five years, from 1876 to 1921 Frayne opened his shop every day at 7 a.m. He worked from 7 a.m. until well into evening, although on Thursday evenings he closed the shop so that he could attend the prayer meeting at the Methodist Church where he was Recording Steward for thirty years and Superintendent of the Sunday School for seventeen years. Frayne also served on the school board for eighteen years. In 1921 after forty-five years, he sold his business to Maurice Quance who had learned the harness making trade from W. J. Beer having started in Beer's shop in 1904. Quance continued his business on Main Street until about 1940 when he moved his shop to his house on William Street. The harness making shops used hides purchased from McCallum's Tannery for 25¢ a pound until it closed in 1911. After that the hides had to be imported by the harness men. Large western steer hides, up to 5½ feet long, were considered to be the best material and it took 60 pounds of this type of leather to make one set of team harness. It took one man a week to make a set of harness. Beer had six men in his shop so his production was six sets per week. At the turn of the century a set of team harness sold for twenty-eight to thirty dollars. As motor transport gradually replaced the horse the harness makers began to disappear or to go into other fields. W. J. Beer added tire repairs, batteries and appliances to his business. Today the harness maker's trade is an almost extinct craft. Maurice Quance still makes halters and bridles and other small harness items in his basement and is the only harness maker left in the area, and as J. M. Southcott once remarked, "perhaps the only true craftsman left in Exeter".

While the harness maker represents fine craftsmanship it is the

blacksmith that we become most nostalgic about when recalling the days of horses. The blacksmith represents strength and skill. His shop was the centre of much village activity. As we mentioned previously many blacksmith shops were small factories. In the early 1860's the following blacksmiths were active in Exeter: John Baker, Richard Brown, R. Davis, Thomas Elston, William Hash n, John Tancock, Digory Braund and John Trick. Several of these men such as Elston and Trick were also wagon makers. Exeter lost its last blacksmith in the mid 1950's when Tom Jolly closed his shop after carrying on a dwindling business for some years. Jolly's shop was on the corner of Huron and Main where the Devon building now stands. A blacksmith's shop had stood on that corner for nearly one hundred years.

Perhaps the most well known blacksmith in Exeter was James Stafford Dignan. Dignan was born in Durham County in 1845. In 1848 the family moved to Hay Township settling three and three-quarter miles west of where Hensall would be. In 1858 when James was thirteen he was apprenticed to John Trick, "blacksmith and carriage maker" in Exeter. The shop was on Main Street south of Gidley's furniture factory (later Ross and Taylor's). Dignan received thirty dollars for the first year, thirty five dollars in the second year and forty dollars for the third year. Being an apprentice was difficult; the boys worked long, hard hours for very little pay and it was illegal for an apprentice to decide unilaterally to quit. This was brought home to a lad in Exeter in the 1870's when he was arrested in London by Constable Gill for having left Mr. Fanson's employ before his apprenticeship was up. Dignan, however, finished his apprenticeship with Trick and left Exeter. He had learned how to make shoes and nails and how to shoe horses and oxen. For oxen two small shoes had to be made for each foot. He worked "all over Southern Ontario" for the next fifteen years returning to Exeter in 1874. He bought out John Trick, his former employer and with his brother John, carried on a blacksmithing and woodworking business in Trick's old stand until about 1892 when he bought Richard Davis' shop where the Post Office now stands. In 1898 he bought out Sam Buckingham and moved to Sam's old shop where the Devon building now stands. Buckingham had been in business there since about 1870 in conjunction with Ed Treble's woodworking shop. Buckingham did blacksmithing and Treble made buggies, cutters, sleighs and other items. At that time charges were ten cents to set a shoe and twenty-five cents for a new shoe. In 1904 prices were increased to twelve and one-half cents to set a shoe and thirty cents for a new shoe.

Dignan continued to do blacksmithing there until 1933 when he finally retired after seventy five years in the trade. He sold his shop to Hillary Horton. Dignan at that time was the oldest, active smith in Canada. He went to work every day at 7 a.m. and felt guilty if he was late. Indeed one morning he worked too long in his garden, so he took a side street to his shop rather than let those on Main Street see him going to work at the shockingly late hour of 9 a.m. Dignan died on March 12, 1939 at the age of ninety-four. He had worked hard all his life. He had three sons, two of whom became smiths. Hillary Horton, who took over Dignan's shop, was killed in 1933 shortly after he bought the shop. Horton was hit by a car while riding his bike on Main Street. Horton had previously operated a shop in part of the old Verity works.

Exeter's Last Blacksmith Shop

Richard Davis operated a shop where the post office now stands. There was another shop next door to Browning's drug store in the early years. W. H. Parsons, J. A. Russell, L. McTaggart in Francistown and Digory Braund above Francistown were other blacksmiths. Braund's shop burned in August 1901 but it was rebuilt. He was located where Snell's Shell station is now. Francis Blatchford (who died at the age of ninety four in 1947), Abe Pym, David Russell and Wesley Simmons were other Exeter blacksmiths. David Russell purchased the shop on the south-east corner of Sanders and Main Streets from A. E. Pym in 1909 when Pym migrated west. Russell was evidently one of the town's practical jokers and it was related how he put "Kihoot" on a hog of Bawden's one day. The hog went crazy, knocked Russell over and ran over to Dr. Tennant's. It ran all over that part of Main Street before calming down. He apparently put kihoot on a goat that was in a 24th of May parade. The goat went wild and frightened Mr. Kirk's donkey at the Metropolitan Hotel. Kirk's donkey was pulling a fish cart at the time. The donkey took off for the river scatter ing fish from the Metropolitan to the bridge. Russell sold out to W. Simmons in 1924. Simmons sold out in 1929 to the Etu Gas Company who put up a gas station on the corner. The company tore the old blacksmith shop down. It had been one of the early brick buildings on Main Street.

There are no blacksmiths left in Exeter now. Jolly was the last. The livery barns and the blacksmith shops were gradually replaced with garages and gas stations and the not unpleasant odors of the blacksmith shop and of horses have been replaced by the noxious fumes of gasoline, diesel fuel and exhaust.

Just as mechanics and garage operators had their lineal ancestors in the smiths and liverymen so do the car dealers have their ancestors in the dealers in horses. Exeter was an important centre in the horse trade. Among the dealers were men such as Messrs. Hawkshaw and Hodgson who bought Clydesdale stallions in the 1870's. Messrs. Hodgson and Oke owned one of the area's top stallions in 1878, known as 'Crown Prince'; he weighed 1790 pounds. An item in April, 1878 noted that he had started on his rounds on April 11 and would visit Hensall, Staffa, Farquhar, Elimville, McGillivray, Crediton and Devon. Oke and Tom Bissett paid W. Hodgson $3,000 for a stallion called "Bank of England." In the 1870s Bissett also owned another locally famous stallion "Clear Grit".

Bawden and McDonnell's barns on John Street were an important centre of the horse trade. These men were importers of Clydesdale, Percheron, and Belgian stallions. They bought and sold horses for decades as we mentioned in another section. Stallions were expensive as this example notes — McDonnell and Bawden sold "Dairy Down," a Clydesdale stallion to George Coward of Usborne for $2,000 in February, 1900. The horse had been imported from Scotland.

T. E. (Tom) Handford was another important dealer. An item in the Advocate of June 2, 1904 mentioned that Handford paid out $15,000 to $20,000 every month for horses making Exeter "one of the best markets for horses in Ontario." In 1909 Handford shipped 41 carloads of horses out of Exeter to the West. There were 800 horses worth $190 each, thus $162,000 worth of horse flesh. Horse dealers also shipped to the U.S. and in 1893 the Advocate noted with satisfaction that the Americans had reduced the tariff on horses from $30 a head to 20% ad valorem. This would improve the trade in "poor to medium animals."

The Boer War stimulated the horse trade and in 1900 Mr. J. D. Graham paid out $50,000 in the Exeter area for horses. He shipped many carloads from Exeter.

Not all deals were big, however. In 1904 James Creech found a horse wandering loose. He took it to the town keeper who then sold it to Creech for ten cents. Creech then sold it for one dollar. Another "big deal" was noted in the paper in 1877:

> "One of our town merchants who is known as an extreme lover of horse flesh traded to a group of gypsies a number of bones piled up in the shape of a horse, the vertebrae being exceedingly well defined and out of which animation had scarcely fled."
>
> He had given this horse plus $2.50 for another noble specimen. That evening the latter horse broke from its stall. The town keeper picked him up, 75¢ released him and $1.00 buried him in the morning. "The heaves are a bad thing to cure especially when applied by gypsies".

Also missing from the local scene now are the notices advertising the stallions' service routes. Such well known studs as "Theobald", "Jaffro", "Rosedene Footprint" and "Joe de Cappelle" made their rounds. The last named stallion's route in the spring of 1920 was as follows: "On Monday morning he will leave his own stable and go to Percy Passmore's for noon, thence to Roy Coward's for night. Tuesday to John Duncan's for noon, thence to Hiram Hanna's for night". This pattern continued through Saturday. Joe was allowed to rest on Sunday. The terms were $15 to insure a foal.

A Horse Sale in Exeter — Tom Handford on extreme right

The laws governing horses on the streets of the village were the forerunners of modern traffic laws. For example, the speed limit was 7 mph, bells were required on horses pulling sleighs or any vehicle on runners. Without bells, horse-drawn sleighs were so quiet

that there was danger of people being run over. Constables Gill and Creech were kept busy in the winter ordering men to put bells on their horses, stopping children from jumping on sleighs and slowing down fast driving. In the other seasons they were kept busy trying to prevent high speed driving. The Times, in 1887, demanded that "the furious driving on Main Street" be stopped and that the constables prevent this driving at twice the legal limit of 7 mph. The constables also tried to prevent people from tying horses to the shade trees — and thereby killing them. The Constables' duty also included getting people to clean up stables. The Times complained about "unfragrant smells effusing from stables". Despite the laws and the constables there was little that could be done about runaways. Runaways, drunk driving and accidents were common on the village streets. The following items have been selected from the Advocate and Times as characteristic of incidents on Exeter's streets in the days of horses:

On June 16, 1887:

> "The residents in the vicinity of the old race course were somewhat startled the other night to notice a man seated in a buggy driving his horse at a furious rate ... he drove into a kettle of soap, collided with a gang plow, ran into a hay rake. ... he was in a state of intoxication. The episode was a strange one to occur in such a civilized country as this."

In April, 1876:

> The Rev. Robert Reynolds, Methodist Minister on the Kippen circuit drove over a rut "at a smart pace" on the London Road. "One of the sulky springs was broken by the jolt, and Mr. Reynolds was suddenly thrown forward from his seat. His heels were resting on the crossbar between the shafts, and his toes under the iron braces at the corners. The suddenness and force of the jolt prevented him from extricating his feet, and he fell with his back across the axle, the back of his head striking the ground and his arms becoming entangled in the ironwork under the sulky. In this position the unfortunate young man was dragged about three-quarters of a mile, the back of his head bumping against the gravel road."
>
> The horse was finally stopped but by then Reynolds was "in a lifeless condition, his head so mutilated and disfigured that he was almost beyond recognition."

In 1874:

> "A team started to run when nearly opposite Mr. Treble's harness shop ... throwing Mr. Mitchell out upon the road, the hind wheel of the wagon passed over his head."

In 1874,

> "A Mrs. Jamieson of Blanshard was crossing the street when a passing horse rushed against her and knocked her down."

In December, 1877:

> "A young colt owned by George Mase broke away and raced down

Main Street like a hurricane."

On August 23, 1877

"On Monday evening last, three of Exeter North's fair damsels were driving along Main Street nearly opposite the cricket ground. Their horse backed into the ditch, broke the wheels after which the wheels resembled the name of a Russian general that had become acquainted with a Turkish battery."

In 1877

"Gait Reporter" ran away while being raced by Will Hooper — "He went as the wind carrying his rider with him to Cottleville." (Hooper's mocking bird died that same week — poor week for Will.)

On December 11, 1884

"On Thursday afternoon last, after a farmer had unloaded his grain, and driven a short distance, his horse took fright at the train and ran from Bober's storehouse down the railway track, keeping nicely in front of the engine."

In 1884

A cow and a horse got tangled up together when the cow walked down the sidewalk and across which the horse and buggy were standing. A dog started the two animals down the street. The horse and the cow, with the cow in the lead, ran away down the street — the people were "so convulsed with laughter that they were powerless to stop the frantic animals." The buggy was wrecked. It was "a tandem rarely seen."

In May, 1892

A steer got away from John Shute and "for a time was master of Main Street."

In July, 1892,

"John Snell was thrown out of his sulky and over the horse's head."

In 1899

Dr. Browning had his arm broken in a runaway.

In 1898

"While at the depot, George Cudmore's horse was frightened by the train and ran away, coming down town at a rapid rate." Cudmore chased the horse, then jumped on the bus "to obtain rapid transportation to catch the beast" but the bus driver "suddenly whipped up his horses and just as suddenly Mr. Cudmore landed on the back of his head."

In 1895

A team belonging to William Ching at the Lake Road made a "lively runaway along Main Street." They collided with a tree, knocked down an old man, Nathan Carrick, broke the wagon, threw out a boy and some bags of chop and finally stopped near the Metropolitan Hotel.

In 1900

The son of Mr. Cantelon of the Metropolitan Hotel was run over by a

runaway horse.

In 1904

Mr. Dow's team was pulling a heavy sleigh and went into a fierce gallop. They smashed William Dixon's rig and caused one of A. Q. Bolmer's little boys to lose control of his horse and cutter.

On June 23, 1904

"The horse attached to Mr. A. Ford's delivery wagon ran away on Main Street yesterday morning and created somewhat of a sensation as it came down the street at breakneck speed colliding with rigs on the wayside amid shouts of 'whoa, whoa.'"

In July 1904

A dray team owned by Fred Gillespie "made a dash for liberty".

In 1914

John Emery's horse ran away on Main Street after being frightened by an automobile.

On May 14, 1931

"A three horse team driven by Mr. Day of the Highway south of Exeter made a wild dash through the village about 7:45 Monday morning and in spite of the early hour attracted the attention of a number of citizens. ... the horses became frightened at a ditching machine and started at a mad gallop with Mr. Day hanging on to the reins. It was one of the most spectacular runaways that has been seen on the Main Street for many years with white horses on either side and a dark horse in the centre running at a furious rate."

In 1899

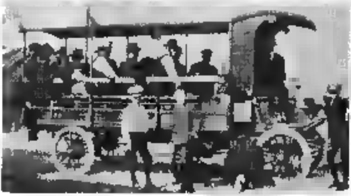
"While two young men, Cecil Rollins and Harold Collins, were driving Dr. Rollins' horse to the office, the animal which was high spirited and difficult to control, ran away immediately upon leaving the stable. ... The buggy collided with an old lamp post and lost a wheel. The horse then ... galloped madly down the street ... until it reached the Central Hotel, where a pile of travellers' trunks threw the horse against a large post, knocking the horse down and throwing the boys out of the buggy."

In 1914

"The milk wagon of Mr. B. How it was struck by a train on Friday morning last and the horse and cart were thrown into a ditch."

The automobile made its first appearance in Exeter in July 1904. F. E. Karn, manager of the Sovereign Bank, and W. W. Taman went to Toronto and bought a McLaughlin car made in Oshawa. The car was a steamer with a speed of 10 to 12 mph. The car met with an unfortunate accident on September 4, 1904 when the Conner brothers "had the machine out near Chiselhurst when by some means it caught fire from the fire box and was burned up totally. Walter Conner was driving but he could find "no friendly pond of water near" to save the vehicle. The reaction of Mr. Karn or Mr. Taman is not recorded. The incident may have discouraged the villagers because it was two years before another motor vehicle was acquired by an Exeter resident. This delay occurred despite the notation of the Advocate in 1896 that "the horseless carriage is here to stay. Its use may be general before twelve months have elapsed." The comment appeared in connection with an item on a horseless carriage contest in Chicago where carriages propelled by electricity, oil, gas, and air were exhibited. In any case, the next vehicle appeared in 1906 when A. Q. Boale purchased a "bus" from Mr. Kurtze of St. Williams. The vehicle was chain driven, weighed two tons and would carry 25 to 30 people or a good quantity of cream and butter. Its speed was 15 mph. Asa Penhale had the first ride in it but after a short distance the drive chain jumped its socket. The vehicle gave so much trouble that people began suggesting that it couldn't run "except downhill".

In 1908 another "motor car" appeared in Exeter when the chauffeur for the late Ed. Fowle, owner of the car, and a relative of W. W. Taman came to town. A picture in the London Free Press of the 14th of July, 1934 shows Al Hearn, Bob Wilcox, H. Beaver, J. Hearne, C. Spackman, Alfred Taylor, J. H. Grieve and Hugh Spackman examining the car.



A. Q. Boale's Bus

The first Reo car in town was owned by S. Martin and son and driven by Wilbur Martin. It had a one cylinder motor under the seat. It was cranked by hand, had no muffler and had oil lamps. It would seat four. By 1914 a number of people owned cars in Exeter including the following: J. A. Stewart, W. J. Heaman, M. M. Doyle, Dr. Quackenbush, C. Zuefle, Charles Snell, Dr. Browning, Wes Snell, W. Martin, H. Ellwerthy, Dr. Kinsman, Dr. Hyndman, T. Baker, D. Hurtlick, Dr. McGillicuddy, Dr. Sweet, A. Coltie, G.

Windsor and the Connor Machine Company. Billy Beer and J. M. Southcott owned a Buick on shares and John Parsons owned a car worth $5,000.

"They had quite a time breaking in the auto" remarked J. M. Southcott. "In the early years of the automobile it was a question of whether the horse or the driver of a horse was the most frightened at the approach of a motor driven car that chugged chugged over the road with a loud noise. Horse drawn vehicles had the right of way. If the driver of a horse drawn vehicle held up his hand the motor vehicle had to stop. Nevertheless there were a good many accidents. Web Martin's Reo once scared a team drawing steel to the Crediton Bridge and the horses went into the river. Web lost the resulting court action. On another occasion Web's car frightened a horse pulling a buggy loaded with eggs. The buggy, the lady driving and the eggs were upset all over the road."

C. B. Snell was driving C. Zurfluh's car down Main Street when the car failed to respond to Snell's cries of "whoa, whoa." He finally got it stopped but he was only one of many who were slow in adapting to the change from horses to cars. Another accident involving a horse and car occurred at Centralia in 1913. "Tom Carling Jr. had a few moments of excitement at Centralia on Sunday afternoon when his horse became frightened at an automobile, bolted into the ditch, overturning the buggy and throwing him out. Tommy was dragged two or three rods but was not hurt. In turning into the road again the buggy righted itself and the horse stopped after a short run, no damage being done."

There were many accidents involving cars in the early years. Often they were due to mechanical failures, poor driving, and bad roads. A selection of early accidents illustrates the causes. These selections are from the Advocate and the Times.

In 1913

> "Sandy Bawden had four axles broken in his car. He was taking a load of baseball fans to Clinton when the left back axle broke two miles north of town. The boys were taken to Clinton by Mr. Petty of Hensall. That same week another axle was broken while Mr. Bawden was on his way to London."

In September 1912

> "Mr. Thornton Baker of Exeter on Thursday evening of last week about 10.30 was nearing Hensall in his auto accompanied by T. Hudson, James O'Neil, F. Hurley and F. Smallacombe of that place when the car struck a stone crossing and jerking the steering gear suddenly caused Mr. Baker to lose control of the machine. Mr. O'Neil was pinned under the car and badly crushed ... the machine received slight damage."

In 1913

> "On Friday morning of last week as Messrs. Frank Durdle and

> William Clayton of the Connor Machine Company were motoring near Winchelsea they met with a serious accident and how they escaped with their lives is a mystery ... they were travelling along the road when the front wheels of the automobile jumped into the rut and one of the hind wheels struck the grass and commenced to skid ... and make a complete somersault ... the top of the auto was smashed to pieces and the windshield and steering gear broken.

A sad fatality occurred in the late summer of 1914 when Mrs. Alex Dow was killed when the auto in which she was riding slewed and capsized into the ditch. A. Miss Burridge was driving the car at that time and all had gone well until within about a mile and a half from town when they turned out to pass a milk wagon. The auto struck a rut which it followed for a couple of rods and after leaving the rut took to the ditch, capsizing and throwing the occupants out. Mrs. Dow was thrown against the windshield breaking the glass and landing into the ditch. She died almost instantly. Miss Burridge and Earl Southcott were thrown clear of the car.

People were frequently being run over by cars. James Ballantyne, Allan Fraser and Tom Yellow were all run over in 1921. Accidents involving automobiles steadily increased as the number of vehicles increased. The newspapers carried lengthy reports of accidents but people continued to acquire motor vehicles in ever increasing numbers. Laws were introduced and enforced in an effort to crack down on speeders. For example in 1926, the London Motor Club complained that the traffic laws in Exeter were being enforced far too rigidly. The Motor Club reported, however, that "rigid enforcement of the letter of the law happens only at times in Exeter so the motorist is advised to go through Exeter only on certain days. ... If Exeter wants to turn all traffic in some other direction there is no better way of doing it ..."

Also in 1926, the village put up the first stop signs in the town. These were located at some of the intersections along Main Street. Magistrate Hawkshaw cracked down on the speeders but one amusing incident may be recounted. Mr. Pilon was brought before Magistrate Hawkshaw for driving one of his cars sixty miles an hour at the south end of the village; the magistrate went to Mr. Pilon two days later to buy the car.

As motor vehicles began to increase in numbers in the village, service stations and garages began to outnumber the blacksmith shops. In 1914, for example, Wes Snell opened a Buick sales office on James Street and had the old Pickard building "fitted up to date" as a garage. He installed a steel gas tank to service the growing numbers of automobiles. Milo Snell sold Ford cars in 1915. His prices were as follows: for a touring car $590.00; a runabout $540.00; a town car $840.00. He also sold Fordson tractors. In 1921

S. J. V. Cann who operated a bus service to Grand Bend purchased the old Verity building and power house which he used as a gas station, cider mill and turning factory. Other early garages and service stations included T. H. Newell's Gray Dort dealership which he sold to Foote and Pilon. C. C. Pilon later operated the Huron Garage which was located where the Tuckey beverage warehouse is now. Pilon had a Chrysler and Plymouth dealership. John Taylor had a tire and battery business in the same location. S. M. Sanders and Alex Parsons had a McLaughlin car garage on James Street.

Mention has been made of the Guenther-Tuckey Transport business which was formed in 1952 when Ben Tuckey amalgamated his firm which had started in 1929 with Earl Guenther's business which had developed from Henry Guenther's stage line. At the time of amalgamation Guenther had 21 trucks and Tuckey 9.

Roads were steadily improved during the past fifty years. Number Four highway was paved for the first time in 1920. After the province assumed responsibility for major highways, further improvements occurred. Number Four highway, for example, was taken over by the province in 1927. The provincial highways are now among the finest in the world and are not closed for very long periods even during major blizzards. As recently as 1936 Number Four was closed for nearly a week during a bad winter storm. In 1971 the highway was partially closed for two or three days but this is an abnormal condition.

The automobile is taken for granted now as a necessity for existence and it is difficult to conceive of the times when the car was a novelty. One last note of interest about automobiles: Dr. Fletcher purchased the last new car sold in Exeter in 1942 and he purchased the first new car sold in Exeter in 1946. There were, of course, no new cars produced during the war years.

While space does not permit us to trace the history of the Centralia RCAF station which made the aircraft a common sight in Exeter we will note that the first airplane to visit Exeter occurred on July 8, 1919. This caused "considerable commotion" as the whir of the motor attracted the attention of the villagers. "The aviators circled the town and did a number of stunts in the air. Finally they landed in a field adjoining the fair grounds. Captain Smith, a returned aviator, was in charge of the machine and Mr. Norman Gillies accompanied him. The first to have the honor of ascending in the skies in town was Mr. J. S. Harvey. Miss Blanche Senior was the second."

A brief word about the provision of telephone service will conclude this chapter on communication. "Telephone service first became available in Exeter in 1884 after the erection of a long distance line by the Bell Telephone Company from London to Clin

ton through Lucan and Exeter. A small switchboard was installed in Robert Hick's jewellery store on Main Street and the telephone directory for 1885 recorded eleven subscribers:

Acheson, Thomas, Central Hotel, Main Street
Bissett Bros., Hardware, Main Street
Christie, Ed., Livery, William Street
Gillespie, J. A., Drayman, Carling Street
Elliot and Elliott, Law Office, Main Street
Hawkshaw, F. W., Commercial Hotel, Main Street
Hicks, R., Jeweller, Main Street
Levett and Hutchins, Grain Merchants, Market Square
London, Huron and Bruce Railway Station
Pickard, Jas., General Merchant, Main Street
Verity, W. H. and Son, Foundrymen, Station Street

The Exeter Telephone Office 1935

George W. Lawson Mary (McKaig) Salter Olive (Lawson) Hicks

Dashwood was connected to Exeter by line in 1891. R. Hicks managed the Exeter Agency until 1905, when Arnold Marchand purchased Hick's jewellery store and took over the management of the Exeter Agency. There were between thirty and forty subscribers at the time. In 1906 Dr. Hyndman organized the Thames Road Telephone Company; in 1909 the Kirkton and Exeter Telephone Company was formed and in 1912 the Hay Township Municipal Telephone System came into existence. All three of these companies connected with the Exeter exchange. In 1912 Exeter's one hundredth telephone was installed.

In 1914 James Lawson bought the business from Marchand and also took over the telephone managership.

In 1926 the Bell Company opened an office one door south of the old office. In 1928 George Lawson who had joined the telephone staff in 1925 assumed the managership. Lawson retired in 1946. During his career he served as night operator as well as a day shift. At that time Exeter had 436 telephones. In 1951 there were 1080 and in 1970 2020. Dial phones were put into operation in Exeter in 1962.

chapter 5

Amusements and Entertainments

The last half of the nineteenth century had few of the worries of the last fifty years. They were really comfortable years in which to live: no wars, no automobile or airplane deaths, no strikes, no singing commercials, no communists, no give me, give me; few government returns, few robberies, but good music, fine hospitality, filled churches, real amateur sport, an honest day's work, fewer needs, a happy people.

(R. N. Creech 1951)

Undoubtedly, Mr. Creech was somewhat overly optimistic in his view of the last half of the 1800's. Life was not, for most people, as idyllic as he suggests. Villages like Exeter had many problems but the townsfolk were generally happy. They worked hard, played sports equally as strenuously and developed their own amusements. Apart from visiting plays, shows and speakers the villagers depended upon their own devices for entertainment, amusement and recreation. This chapter will look at some of these amusements.

Lovemaking, the "universal amusement" thrived in Exeter as

it did (and does and will) everywhere else. Instruction in the art received comment in the local paper. The Times carried advice on both kissing and love letter writing. Some advice on kissing from the Times of 1874 is given for those indulging in the practice in 1973.

The science of kissing:

> "People will kiss, — not one in a hundred knows how to extract bliss from lovely lips... Take the left hand of the lady in your right one, let your hat go to any place out of the way; throw your left hand gently over the shoulder of the lady, and let it fall down the right side, towards the belt. Don't be in a hurry; draw her gently, lovingly to your heart. Her head will fall lightly upon your shoulder — and a handsome shoulder strap it makes. Don't be in a hurry; send a little life down your left arm. Her left arm is in your right; let there be an impression to that, not like the grip of a vise, but a gentle clasp, full of electricity, thought and respect. Don't be in a hurry. Her hand is carelessly on your shoulder. You are nearly heart to heart. Look down into her half-closed eyes. Gently, yet manfully press her to your bosom. Stand firm. Be brave and don't be in a hurry. Her lips are almost open. Lean forward with your head, not the body. Take good aim; the lips meet, the eyes close, the heart opens, the soul rides the storms, troubles, and trials of this life (don't be in a hurry). Heaven opens before you. No fuss, no noise, no fluttering and squirming like hook impaled worms. Kissing don't hurt; it don't require a brass band to make it legal."
>
> (The Times 1874)

Kissing

> "Of course you must be taller than the lady you kiss; take her right hand in yours, and draw her so gently towards you that you do not derange the economy of her tippet or ruffle — your left arm will find its place without instruction, at the same time the lady will throw her head back and you have nothing to do but lean a little forward, and the thing is done. Don't make a noise about it, as if you were firing percussion caps; don't pounce down upon it like a hungry hawk after an innocent dove — but silently revel in the sweet blissfulness of your opportunity, without ever once smacking your lips, as you would over a bowl of turtle soup, or a glorious appearance of well-roasted duck."
>
> (The Times May 10, 1877)

Aside from the universal amusement and recreation the good villagers of Exeter found various other forms of diversion. Drinking, as we have seen, was a favorite diversion from the earliest days. Ancillary to drinking was, naturally, fighting. A good fight diverted the onlookers and the participants as well. We noted in a previous chapter, for example, how a "gentleman" named MacDonald suffered the loss of his nose when it was bitten off in a "drunken spree" by Bruce Brownlee. Fights between villagers and farmers were not uncommon in the 1870's. The Times noted that

> "a lively fracas occurred in front of the post office. The countrymen

retreated in tolerable good order. No serious damage was done."

Fights between the Exeterites and the folk from Francistown were likewise not infrequent and events like this provided diversions until the recent past.

Visiting gypsies provided various forms of amusement for the villagers. Fights, fortune telling, horsetrading and other recreation was provided by the gypsies who camped in the groves and woods around Exeter and in "Pickard's Grove" off the river. As late as 1928 gypsies stirred up a minor disturbance. An Usborne farmer claimed a gypsy woman had stolen some of his money while she was telling his fortune. Autos were dispatched in hot pursuit of the "thieves". They were finally apprehended in Zurich by Constables W. J. Bissett and Ed Willis.

Work provided amusement as well for the early settlers. An item noted by W. H. Johnston in an article published in the London Free Press in 1938 had to do with the fast cradling that Dick Holman and Dick Handford were famous for in the area.

> "One day Dick Holman's brother told an old man about Dick's skill to do fast cradling. The old man bet the brother that Dick could not cradle an acre of oats in one hour. The bet was accepted and rules made to govern the contest.
>
> It was a great event and a large crowd came to see it. The old man came on crutches more than a mile and they appointed him as timekeeper.
>
> The two Dicks used the same pair of cradles and Dick Handford was given the privilege of whetting the scythes so that Dick Holman would not have to stop. Dick Handford went to the opposite end of the field and had the scythe sharp when Dick Holman came along. This method was continued throughout the contest.
>
> Round and round the acre swung the cradler, faster and faster slipped away the time and many were the predictions. 'He'll never make it.' Others said, 'Just wait. He'll do it.'
>
> He knew what he was doing and kept right on swinging his cradle with ease and precision of clockwork while laying the grain behind him in beautifully arranged swaths or ledges as they were often called.
>
> With tireless energy he kept on until when the last cradleful slipped off the fingers the old timekeeper called 57 minutes and 30 seconds.
>
> The old man cheerfully paid the bet but declared those were machines not human flesh."

In these early years, every task took on some elements of amusement. Barn raisings are other illustrations of this.

In any case, as time went on more sophisticated amusements were developed. A popular entertainment was the weekly paper which not only kept folk informed of the news and social events but also provided another popular feature, the weekly serialized story. These heart-rending romances were the "soap operas" of the nineteenth century. Some women undoubtedly would have trouble containing themselves as they waited for Thursdays to come so that they could follow the adventures of "Rosalie Rathorne" once again. This particular story was a "romance of the heart" which said the Times, "will bye and bye be termed sensational". It was the story of "a charming, young girl of middle height, the graceful undulations of whose form assure us of its perfect symmetry". Rosalie after her many clandestine meetings with Arthur Graham finally demanded, "Oh! Oh! I must be proclaimed a wife ere I become a mother!" Such poignant tales as this and others such as "An Egyptian Romance" or "Nina the Nihilist" were printed in Toronto and sent each week to the Times and various other weekly papers.

Every activity was the basis of socializing and entertainment. We noted that the early settlers made their chores somewhat lighter by turning them into social events. Even in the 1870's the Times was still commenting on such pioneer activities as berrying parties. The editor pointed out that "ripe cherries, new potatoes, green apples, and doctor's bills are on the program for the next few days." Even a leap year provided an opportunity for amusement as it induced the formation of a "Bachelors' Protective Association". The executive in 1888 included L. Rissett, H. L. Billings, R. Farmer and the peripatetic Nicholas Dye Hurdon. Said the Times, "The girls should boycott any young man whom they have reason to believe has joined this infamous league".

Dancing provided a means to while away the winter evenings. There had been dancing from the days of the earliest settlers and notes about dances were common in the pages of the newspapers. For example, in 1874 the Times noted that

> the near approach of the season of long evenings and social gatherings is foreshadowed by the falling leaves rustling in shaded streets (and by) the movements of the devotees of Terpsichore.

Dances were held in barns, lodge halls, halls above stores, the Opera House, homes and so on. As time went on dancing academies were established including one set up in 1903 by J. W. Watson in Fanson's Hall. Watson gave instruction in "all the latest dances, including the three steps and Florodora". His academy was conducted in an "orderly and respectable manner". Many Exeterites will still remember the dances in the Dome Rink at Spruce Grove, the new arena, Grand Bend, the Opera House and many other places. Such renowned bands as "Archie Cunningham and his Royal Marines", "Alan Brown's Orchestra", "Kekoa's 7 piece Hawaiian Orchestra", "McKinney's Chocolate Dandies" and others provided the music in the 1920's and 1930's.

Church picnics, lodge picnics, family picnics have always been standard recreational activities. Camping and cottaging at Grand

Bend became popular in the late 1850's and has remained a favourite haunt for the local people. Soap bubble parties amused the young ladies and gentlemen of Exeter in the 1880's. There would be contests with prizes to see who could make the largest bubble or accomplish other similar magnificent achievements. Such parties as these and taffy pulls were simply devices and excuses for people to get together for amusement in the days preceding radio, television, films and other forms of entertainment.

Birthdays, Easter, Christmas and the other festivals were further opportunities for amusements. Some "Jottings by J.M.S." about Christmas are given below:

> "Those were the days when the only means of travel was by train and the London, Huron and Bruce, the butter and egg special, did a thriving business. There were four trains a day then, one going north and the other going south in the morning and the same at night. The depot was the place to meet your friends, particularly Christmas eve or Christmas morning.
>
> On Christmas morning the favourite pastime was meeting old friends at the post office. The post office was situated in the south part of what is now Lindenfield's store. Mail was sorted Christmas morning and there was the usual anticipation of what the mail would bring. The young people home for Christmas found it a convenient meeting place. In one corner of the waiting room was a candy counter operated by the Gould sisters.
>
> Then as now, there was the usual speculation as to whether there would be snow and particularly ice for skating on Christmas and New Years as this was the favourite pastime in those days. A band was usually present for skating the old year out and the new year in.
>
> Across the road from the post office, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Follick ran a bake shop and restaurant in what is now the pool room and social centre. If there were ever ardent temperance advocates with Christian principles, Mr. and Mrs. Follick were that couple.
>
> We had lived beside the Follicks ten years and to the Southcotts it was a second home and the memories we treasure most today are the Christmas morning snacks we used to get at the bakery while they were in business and the Christmas breakfasts enjoyed in their home up until a few years ago with the passing of Mrs. Follick.
>
> A wood-burning stove provided heat for the bake shop and on Christmas morning Mr. Follick would have a glowing fire of coals in front of which he made the golden brown toast upon which he lavished the butter and with jam and coffee we had a wonderful time.
>
> When the Follicks retired from business the Christmas morning breakfast was continued in the home and as our family grew they were all included. After breakfast there was usually a worship period followed by a sing song. It started the day off on a very happy note. But times have changed and only memory lingers."

A choice tid bit known as Devonshire cream, or more commonly called scald cream was another Christmas treat

> "During the early history of the community, Devonshire cream was often used in place of butter, particularly before the butter churn became an established utensil in the home. A goodly number of town people kept cows which ran at large on the village streets.
>
> For making Devonshire cream, fresh milk was put into shallow pans and allowed to stand until the cream had risen to the top. Then the pan of milk and cream was placed into another pan with water and placed on the stove and very slowly brought to the scalding point. After cooling, the scalded cream was then taken off in layers and usually placed in a fancy bowl ready for the table. The scalded milk was very palatable and would keep sweet longer than the fresh milk."

Christmas parties and concerts in the churches and schools added to the season and as always visiting, eating and drinking rounded off the season.

Organized amusements and recreation rested generally with the churches, lodges and clubs. Exeter has had quite a number of lodges and clubs. Some of these include the Exeter Sons of England Benevolent society, The Orange Lodge, Masons, Oddfellows, Royal Templars of Temperance, Sons of Temperance, The Grange, Independent Order of Foresters, Knights of Pythias, Ku Klux Klan, Lions, Kinsmen, Beta Sigma Phi, the Legion, Scouts, Guides and so on. The Temperance Lodges were discussed previously. Little is known about the Sons of England except that it was Plymouth Lodge Number 63. N. Dyer Hurdon, Hugh Spackman, H. L. Billings, W. Andrews were the chief officers.

The Ku Klux Klan had a brief flurry in Exeter in 1926. The Klan of Kanada was organized in Western Ontario in 1925. On Sunday evening, May 23, 1926, forty candidates from Exeter and area were initiated into the order in a ceremony held in the fairgrounds. Several thousand spectators were present. "Klansmen from Western Ontario gathered in large numbers. At the ceremony, Knights paraded in their white robes, several were on horseback. Two clergymen delivered addresses outlining the claim that the order was a 'Christian organization that stood for the supremacy of the Christian religion, the protection of womanhood, one language, free speech and a free press.'

By the eery light of a flaming cross the initiatory ceremony was performed by the Knight Kleagle. The initiates assembled in the centre of a square made by Klansmen and there they "took the solemn oath." Led by the band, the assembled throng sang several hymns after which lunch was served at the crystal palace." It is unclear exactly who the local bigots were who felt it was necessary to inaugurate this infamous order in Exeter. Perhaps it is just as well that their names were not recorded.

The Independent Order of Oddfellows Lodge 67 was established in Exeter in 1871. The charter members of the lodge were James

Giles, Dr. Young, Cowan, Alex Lewis, Abraham Sanders, William Rollins, and David Johns. Added immediately to the rolls were Robert Pickard, William Earl and Charles Wilkie. By the end of 1871 Henry Lambrook (cabinet maker), John Greenway (butcher), Isaac Carling (merchant), James Kydd (carriage maker), John McLaughlin (moulder), John A. Hayes (grocer), John Vanstone (watch maker), John Broderick (merchant), John Ross (carpenter), William Bawden (farmer), A. G. Dyer (carpenter), Robert Bissett (tinsmith), and T. A. McConnell (flour and feed), had become lodge members.

Within six years four of the six charter members had been suspended. In addition two of those listed above had withdrawn by the end of 1877. By 1891 the lodge was on the verge of collapse because of the reduced membership and lack of interest. After the turn of the century, however, the lodge began to grow and by 1946 there were 203 members. The present membership is about 240.

The lodge meetings were held in several places in the early years. Mace's Hall, Samwell's Hall, D. Johns Hall, Senior's Hall were used as meeting places. In 1887 the present building which contains the lodge rooms was erected and the meetings moved to this building shortly after it had been built.

The Masonic order came into existence in Exeter in 1860. The first meeting of Lebanon Forest Lodge No. 133 was held in the Francistown Hotel on May 28, 1860. According to R. N. Creech's historical sketch of the Lodge from which most of this information comes, the meeting was held in Madill's Tavern. Perhaps Madill was the proprietor of this hotel at the time. The charter was received on September 26, 1860. The charter members were William Diamond, John Dempsey, Hugh Dunseith, Robert Brabson, Patrick Jamieson, John Collingwood, George McLeod and William Verity. Worshipful Brother William Diamond was the first Master, Brother John Dempsey Senior Warden, Brother Hugh Dunseith Junior Warden, Brother George McLeod Secretary, Brother Patrick Jamieson Treasurer, Brother William H. Verity Senior Deacon, Brother Robert Brabson Junior Deacon, and Brother John Collingwood Tyler. The lodge members met "on the first Monday on or before the full moon."

The meeting place changed from time to time. By September 1860 the lodge met in Robert Bissett's tavern which is described as being on Main Street about 50 yards south of the bridge and on the west side. This information is puzzling since the only tavern in this area was McConnell's and it was supposedly on the east side. Perhaps Bissett's tavern was the old McConnell Inn and the location was indeed on the west side. The lodge did not meet long in Bissett's Inn. From February 25, 1861 to June 1864 the brethren met in William Balkwill's Tavern which was located approximately across from where G. Arthur's service station is now. In June, 1864 the lodge moved back to Bissett's tavern and remained there until 1872. There was much moving during the next few years with the lodge meeting in a variety of places including Mace's Hall (where the IGA is now), Samwell's Hall, Dave John's Hall, the rooms above the Sovereign Bank, Senior's Hall and eventually in the McDonnell, Dickson, Carling Hall.

The Orange Lodge began in Exeter in the early years of the village. It existed in the 1860's and by the 1870's was thriving. Exeter was the scene of many July 12 extravaganzas. For example on July 12, 1874 there were 7000 people gathered in Exeter for the celebration. Said the Times:

> "The village was most beautifully decorated by the Orangemen of Exeter who had erected four grand arches, one in front of George Willis, Esq., Reeve, one in front of Mr. Carling's store, one on Mill Street near Main on the line of march to the grove."

Each of these arches was covered with evergreens, British ensigns and Union Jacks. "The glorious old flag that's braved for a thousand years the battle and the breeze." There were flags and bunting flying from the houses and stores. The parade was led by the Zurich brass band followed by 1500 Orangemen in procession. The mile-long parade marched from Reeve Willis' up Main Street to Gidley, thence west to William and south to North Street, east to Main Street and thence to the rear of Samwell and Pickard's store. According to the Times, the temperature reached 100 degrees that day. The Exeter Lodge had been responsible for the arrangements and in 1874 the executive that year included the following officers:

Worshipful Master	Brother C. Willis
Deputy Master	Brother J. Spackman
Treasurer	Brother Lambrook
Secretary	Brother J. White
Committeemen	Brother W. Hawkshaw
	Brother T. Staddon
	Brother J. Pratt
	Brother L. Hardy
	Brother J. Balkwill

By 1886 there were thirty lodges in Huron County. The South Huron Lodge met in Exeter and at the April 1886 meeting the following motion was passed:

> "A resolution was unanimously adopted commending the Government in the noble stand taken by them in carrying out the death sentence on Louis Riel."

The same meeting also "granted the sum of $20.00 to assist

the Rev. Brother Chiniquy in carrying out his noble work". Chiniquy, the renegade Catholic priest who eventually joined the Presbyterian Church had lectured in Exeter a few years previously in 1878 in the local Presbyterian Church.

On July 12, 1889 it was reported that 15,000 people were in Exeter for the annual observation of the great battle. Another great parade was held in Exeter in 1893. The following items are taken from the Times' report of the event:

> "The celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of Boyne was right royally celebrated in Exeter with characteristic zeal and interest. Early in the morning the lodges of the more immediate neighbourhood together with their farmer friends, who, being possessed of a true feeling of patriotism, left their haying which had well begun, — began to arrive in town in large numbers.
>
> At 1:30 o'clock the procession was formed at the Metropolitan Hotel and was fully one and a half miles long . . . the procession as it wound its way along Huron Street to Snell's grove was a bright broad ribbon of rainbow hues. . . .
>
> Many of the old time characteristics of an orange parade have been replaced by the introduction of new and more elegant procedure . . . and improved conduct."

The speeches were suitably bigoted for the occasion and cries of "No Popery" filled the air. References to the historic battles of Londonderry, Enniskillen and the Boyne brought cheers and it was proclaimed that Orangemen would again die "for the Truth". One reverend gentleman brought cheers and shouts when he proudly avowed that he would never shake hands with any treasonable papist.

L. H. Dickson was Worshipful Master of the Exeter lodge No. 924 at this time. In 1894 the South Huron Lodge heard "several eloquent speeches" and passed a resolution congratulating Sir Mackenzie Bowell "upon his elevation to the Premiership of this grand Dominion". In 1895 the following "amusing incident" was reported. The Orangemen had gone to the Presbyterian Church for a service conducted by the Rev. Mr. Acheson. He opened his sermon at eleven o'clock and "after somewhat exhausting his store for the occasion he thought it time to close, but lo, according to the clock he had just preached half an hour". Rev. Acheson of course had to continue preaching which he did until the clock said 12 o'clock. It was however 1 o'clock and he had preached for two hours. The clock was out of order. The people "wondered what they had done to be subjected to a two hour sermon".

The century was closed with another grand celebration on July 12, 1899. As usual the streets of the village were "gorgeously decorated". As usual the "brethren" assembled on the recreation grounds. The parade was headed by County Master Scarlett mounted on the traditional white horse. Suitable references to "Romanism" drew cheers. Mr. D. M. Jermyn of Wiarton the Grand Master of Orangeism in Ontario indicated that Orangemen should work at "enlightening Catholics". Jermyn also stoutly defended the liquor dealers who had come under attack from a previous speaker. Cheers followed Jermyn's invocation that "all Protestants join hands in keeping down the Catholics or they will rise in their ascendancy again and tyranny will prevail". "The weather was perfect and the dust on the streets well laid" and 5000 Orangemen and their supporters were suitably harangued.

Main Street Exeter July 12 about 1930

Orangemen continued to hold their celebrations in Exeter from time to time. The Lodge continued to exist in Exeter until recent years. The Lodge is defunct in Exeter now and across Ontario it has been reduced in power and influence. It is probably safe to suggest that the Lodge in Ontario is a relic of another age and will not emerge as a potent force again.

Visiting forms of entertainment brought the outside world to the village. On Tuesday, August 28, 1877 the villagers and area farmers looked forward to thrills and excitement from Coleman and Hamilton's great London Sensation and Field Museum. The people were not disappointed when the show set up on the cricket grounds featuring the following:

Melodramatic Miracles
Theatrical Transformations
Ethereal Groupings
Aerial Evolution
Unearthly effects

Illustrious Living Prodigies
Unsolved enigmas and supernatural puzzles of Europe
Balloon Ascension at 1 o'clock

The show was advertised by a band drawn by eight horses which paraded through the streets. At 1 o'clock Mr Gaston "went high into the heavens", his balloon came down about a mile east of town. The show featured five "tableux" which were ghost scenes in which "figures floated through the air or remained suspended". Mr. Whiston, "humorist" and Madame Etta, "contortionist" also entertained the local folk.

Visiting shows and circuses came to Exeter every year. Such outfits as Howe's Circus and Wild West Show in which two cowboys were shot "very cleverly" entertained the townsfolk. Another feature of the Howe Show saw cowboys shoot peanuts off each others' heads at ten yards.

Another show was Lemen Brothers World Monster Show. This show listed the following exhibits:

Three Ring Circus
Five Continent Menagerie
Roman Hippodrome
The Mighty Bovalapus, "mighty monster of the deep"
Rajah, the largest elephant in captivity
Captain Santiago, high diver
Little Edna, rider
Racing steers
Kittie Kruger, rider
the only Ou-Rang-ou-Tang in Canada
Grand street parade at 10 o'clock

The 3000 people who came were disappointed. "The menagerie was poor", "the tents leaked", and none of the advertised performers appeared.

Other touring entertainers, lecturers, plays and shows provided Exeter's citizens with "professional" or "semi-professional" entertainment. Some of it was not very good, some of it was apparently very acceptable. The following items simply provide some illustrations of the kinds of visiting entertainers who came to the village in the late 1800's and first part of this century. These touring shows would use various halls such as Fanson's Hall, churches, the Opera House and later Leavitt's Theatre.

Lecturers came to speak on all manner of topics. Chiniquy spoke in Exeter in 1878 as did the "ex-monk from Bulgaria", F. G. Widows. According to the Times, Widows' "main objective was to get money". Miss Evans "The Cambrian oratress" lectured on temperance as did many others. Commander Cheyne R. N. came to Exeter in 1886 sponsored by the Mechanics Institute. Cheyne spoke in Drews' Hall (The Opera House) and his subject was "Egypt and the late war". His enlightening address was "illustrated with 65 magnificent lime light views". Admission was 25¢ for adults and 10¢ for children. J. W. Bengough also spoke in Exeter in 1886. Bengough was considered to be "Canada's greatest caricaturist".

Theatrical companies were frequent visitors to the village. The usual place for the performances was the Opera House. This building stood across from the Town Hall immediately north of the present Fred Darling store. Darling tore the building down a few years ago. The Opera House building was probably built in the 1870's by the Gidleys. It was acquired by Drew in the mid 1880's and he undertook a major renovation in 1886. The seating capacity was variously stated with figures ranging from 700 to 1200. The Opera House building had various owners down through the years and the downstairs section housed various businesses.

Travelling theatrical companies presented plays there. In 1886 for example the Times drama critic reported on a play entitled "Only a Drunkard's Wife":

> "Frequently the Exeter theatre-going people are deceived by amateur companies, but never we believe, have they been made the victims of so detestable a fraud as by the troupe styled 'The Hayes Peoples' Theatre Company' in a drama entitled, "Only a Drunkard's Wife". Shortly after opening, the performance being of such a disgusting and clumsy character ... the more [illegible] of the audience returned to their homes"

Evidently some spectators remained and "kept up a tumult of derision". The Times' report said the group consisted of a lot of lazy people from London doing the towns to gain subsistence for the winter.

In January, 1887 Denner's Lyceum Dramatic Company did three plays, "Three Stars", "Divorce" and "Our Boys". In July 1886 the St. Marys Opera Company presented the opera "Patience" in the roller rink. Said the Times:

> "As a rule we don't expect much from amateur clubs and the St. Marys club certainly filled the expectation."

The Times kindly requested that the company "not perform again in Exeter".

In June 1887 the Baird Company presented a number of plays to Exeter audiences. The offerings included:

New Kathleen
Cast Adrift or Father's Curse ("performed in supereminent style")
Uncle Josh the New England Farmer
Nip and Tuck
The Gilded Cage (by Mark Twain)
Betsy Baker and Ben Bolt

The advertisements said a "handsome china set" was to be given to the lucky ticket holder. "There will be no deceit practised, the china will be left in Town." Admission was 20¢ and 10¢.

Other touring players to the Opera House in the 1880's included such celebrated troupes as The Royal Star Dramatic Company. This group it was said "will give the people of Exeter an idea of the perfection to which drama can be brought". F. R. Wren's Uncle Tom's Cabin Company arrived on December 24, 1884 in its own rail car which carried the company of 20 including 8 Jubilee Singers from the "University for the Coloured Race at Memphis". Varey's Grand Moving Panorama showed "War Scenes" and "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" in May, 1884.

Other popular groups in Exeter were "The Alleghanian Bell Ringers", the "Kickapoo Indian Company", the "Diamond Medicine Company", "Swiss Bell Ringers", the "McGibney Family" and many others. Throughout the 1890's the Opera House saw Uncle Tom's Cabin played many times. Also appearing in 1890 was the Hyers Company, a troupe of "coloured folk" whose "singing and dancing is of an infectious character". In 1892 "Harry Hart's Pleasure Party" presented a "snide show" that was "not quite proper". The details of this presentation by 4 men and one woman are obscure, unfortunately. Gity Brothers Minstrels, the Rankin Scottish Concert Company and Burichea Monster Theatre Company appeared in 1893. The latter group did Uncle Tom's Cabin on August 8, 1893 with "elegant scenery, novel mechanical effects, ferocious bloodhounds, the band, the Magnolia Quartette". The performance was evidently "tiresome to behold".

Florence Washington and W. E. Ramsay presented scenes from School for Scandal in 1893. In 1897 the Opera House saw the most "marvellous invention of the nineteenth century", namely "Cinematographe". For two and one-half hours Exeterites saw scenes from London, England, the Coronation of the Czar of Russia, Boxing, ocean liners, soldiers, cavalry charges and other exciting pictures.

Local talent could also be seen in the Opera House. In January, 1900 N. Dyer-Hurdon and Louis Day organized a "Patriotic Concert" in aid of the Red Cross work in South Africa. "A crowded house and the receipts should evidence our loyalty to the Empire on this occasion." The sum of $168.30 was raised by the show which included the Exeter band, singing by Myra Pickard and Messrs. Johns, Hicks, Davidson and Bell as well as by the popular Mac Vincent. The latter gentleman sang "I want to be a soldier" and brought the house down. Judd Davidson presented a violin solo. Nickolas Dyer-Hurdon did Kipling's "Absent Minded Beggar" set to music of his own composition. Principal Boyd "drilled" the boys from the school to conclude the show.

Again in 1903 Exeter's theatre-going folk had the opportunity to see Uncle Tom's Cabin. This time John F. Stowe's company came to town in its own special train. The company set up a "monster tent" which could seat 2500. This performance featured a "Grand Allegorical Transformation Scene, an Optograph, Professor Bullinger's Orchestra and a Pack of Siberian Bloodhounds".

In 1906 the Big Bijou Company spent a week in the Opera House, presenting "The Banker's Daughter", vaudeville acts such as songs and dances by Billy Conlin, impersonations by W. C. Stuart, Ed Stauffer's serio-comic acts, Stuart and Burton's songs and dances, contortionists, acrobats and many others. The door prize, one ton of coal, was won by Frank Taylor.

In July, 1908, Madame Livinski, a Psychic Palmist spent a week at the Commercial Hotel giving her readings for 50¢ and 35¢.

The Prisoner of Zenda was "given in metropolitan completeness" in 1900. About the same time a cast of Exeter actors, including Mac Vincent, T. B. Hooper, Miss Leavitt, N. Case and R. N. Creech presented the play Finnigan's Fortune.

The Opera House continued to be used for plays, lectures, amateur contests, Chautauqua, dances and other events during the decades following the First Great War. In 1922 Dr. McTavish presented a series of lectures on "A Woman For Sale" and "Dirt, Debt, Doubt, and the Devil". Chautauqua was very popular in the 1920's. The details of a July 1920 Chautauqua are shown below.

CHAUTAUQUA WEEK
Four glorious days in Exeter

Monday, July 12th.

Carveth Wells, Explorer
Lecture with pictures

The Shakespeare Quartette
Classical and popular songs

Tuesday, July 13th

Miss Constance Rowlson
"Canada's Womanhood"

The Jordan Entertainers
Program of attractive features

Fanahanka's Pets
A spectacular entertainment

Wednesday, July 14th

Wagnerian Quartet

Soprano, violin, viola, 'cello, piano

William H. Stout, lecturer
instructive, popular

Thursday July 15th.

Old Song Singers
Costumed songs of olden times

Dr. Robert Norwood of Philadelphia,
well-known Canadian lecturer

On November 14, 1917 the Opera House was the site of the presentation of "The Birth of a Nation". This was billed as "The Most Tremendous Dramatic Spectacle that the brain of man has yet produced". There were 5,000 scenes, 18,000 characters, 3,000 horses. The biggest battles of the Civil War were re-enacted. "Wonderful artillery duels in which real shells, costing $80.00 apiece were used."

Local drama groups used the Opera House over the years. Such groups as the Exeter Amateur Dramatic Club, the Trivitt Memorial Players, The James Street Church Young Peoples' League, the Exeter Choral Society presented works. The Goderich Comic Opera Company presented "The Lass of Limerick Town" in 1918; the production was sponsored by the Exeter Patriotic League. Also in 1918 the Exeter Dramatic Club presented the play "The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary". Some of the players included Mrs. N. J. Dore, R. W. Fuke, W. S. Munson, N. J. Senior, Miss L. I. Boyle; "everyone took their parts well," said the Advocate. After the Opera House ceased to function local groups used the stage of the school. For example, in the 1950's the Exeter Players Guild tried to revive the tradition of local drama.

So the old Opera House was the main centre of entertainment in Exeter until the appearance of films and the opening of a motion picture theatre. The first reference to the showing of film in Exeter was in 1901 when the Cox Brothers presented "a film" of the funeral procession of Queen Victoria, scenes from the South African War, The Galveston, Texas Disaster and other current events. However, the real beginning of film entertainment in Exeter came in 1912. W. Leavitt as we noted previously had erected the Dome Rink and it was here that the first films were shown in Exeter on a regular basis. Leavitt had come to Exeter from Granton where he was born in 1852. He was one of the area's notable businessmen operating a variety store known as Leavitt's Fair, the Dome Rink and the Grand Bend Park which he had acquired from John Spackman in 1898. In 1914 he converted the former Gould residence on Main Street into the Dome Moving Picture Theatre (located where Rowe's Electric Store is now). In the same year, Enson Bice of Clandeboye had petitioned Council to grant him a licence to open a "movin' picture show". Apparently nothing ever came of Bice's plans but Leavitt's theatre prospered. Among the first films shown in 1914 were the six reels shown on Saturday, August 30. These were Dash for Liberty, Hannigan's Harem, World Above, Unwritten Chapter, Mary's New Hat, and Janitor's Quiet Life. Admission was 10¢. Other early films included Brewster's Millions, the Call of the North (in five parts with 317 scenes), Enoch Arden and Ten Nights in a Bar Room (A Moral Lesson Never to be Forgotten). The great film stars of the silent movies flickered across the screen of the Dome to the piano music played by Mr. Leavitt's daughter. Douglas Fairbanks Sr., Ken Maynard, Jackie Coogan, Rudolph Valentino, Lon Chaney, Hoot Gibson and Harold Lloyd, Tom Mix, in the Great K and A Train Robbery, W. C. Fields, Will Rodgers, Elmo Lincoln as Tarzan of the Apes entertained the people of Exeter as they did all over North America.

In 1931 "Leavitts New Talking Picture Theatre" was opened. This is now the McKerlie Automotive Building. The new theatre had 357 seats and was "up to date in every way". It was operated by Leavitt and his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Cochrane from 1931 to 1949. In 1949 Mrs. Cochrane sold the theatre to G. D. Thompson of St. Marys. Dwindling audiences forced the closing of the theatre in the late 1950's.

Despite outside entertainers and films Exeter people did provide much of their own entertainment. A most important group in any town was the local band. During the past one hundred years, Exeter has had a band of some kind for most of those years. The traditional marching band has not operated in Exeter in recent years but from time to time the town has had good brass bands. It is difficult to say when a band was first formed in Exeter but it was in existence in the early 1870's. A report in the Times in 1874 reads:

> "The members of the Exeter Band have a rare time peregrinating around from house to house feeding on the best Baltimore oysters. Only a few nights ago they enlivened Exeter North with the beautiful strains of music floating out on the calm evening wind ... and got fed by the gratified listeners."

An item in 1873 referred to a "promenade concert given by the Exeter Brass Band in the drill shed on the evening of the first of July". In 1874 another item reported a "Concert of the Exeter Cornet and Orchestra Band in Drew's Hall". The Times report praised the performance of the band in the highest terms. It seems reasonable to conclude that a well-organized band would take some time to develop; consequently, it may be suggested that the bands must have been formed at least a few years earlier.

It is worth noting, just incidentally, that in 1874 a Professor Palmer took up residence in Exeter with the intention of starting a boys' band. After the boys had purchased the instruments from the Professor and he had instructed them in the musical arts a "grand concert" would be staged. The "Music Man" stayed in Exeter for a time but evidently he did not make much progress in forming a boys' band.

During the summers, then, of the 1870's the band marched "up and down the principal streets" playing for the residents. Concerts were given in various places. In July, 1876 an item in the Times noted that the "Exeter Brass Band" had given another July 1st concert. "A few more of these promenade concerts would bring our band more fully into note" said the Times. The band would often accompany the firemen as they paraded about the town. The band would serenade citizens on special occasions as it did in April, 1886 when the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Atkinson, newly married, was entertained. At that time the band may have been known as the Exeter Fusilier Band. During these early years from the late 1860's perhaps to the 1890's the Director was first Sam Gidley and later Edward Treble.

In 1890, the band underwent a reorganization. By this time Council had taken over the instruments and was providing some financial support for the band's operation. It was reported that the Executive included in 1890 W. E. Gundy, President, Luther Gill, Vice-President, Bert Fake, Treasurer and Harry Gidley, Secretary. The reorganized group was called "The New Exeter Brass Band". Throughout the 1890's and early years of this century the Band presented concerts in the Town Hall, the Opera House, on the school grounds where a band stand had been erected, in Riverview Park and in Victoria Park. Some time during these years Harry Gidley assumed the leadership of the band. Harry was following in his uncle's footsteps. Samuel Gidley had led the band in its earliest years. Harry led the Exeter Brass Band for many years and also founded and led the Exeter Orchestra "which played many engagements throughout Western Ontario". Harry was himself "an accomplished cornet soloist and the master of many brass instruments and drums". Harry Gidley also managed the Opera House during its later years as a center of theatrical and musical productions. Mr. and Mrs. Gidley lived in the old Gidley house on William Street. Harry Gidley died on March 26, 1944; he was the last of the Gidley family to live in Exeter.

During the 1890's and the decade before the First War the Band played frequently and evidently it played well. For example, in July, 1899 the Band presented "the most high-classed open air concerts that the people of Exeter have ever listened to." The program included the following:

March "Canton Halifax"
Nordica Waltzes
Rocked In The Cradle Of The Deep (trombone solo by Mr Alfred Davidson)
Soldiers In The Park
The Plunkville Serenade
Comin' Thru' The Rye (clarinet solo by George Easrutt)

The concert included other items as well and was evidently well received.

Another presentation in the 1890's by the band is described below in an item from the Advocate:

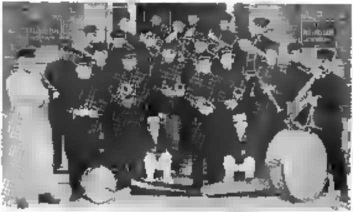
> "At 7 o'clock the north and south companies formed into procession at the Town Hall, and headed by the band paraded Main Street. The procession, which was composed of about 60 firemen in uniform, each carrying a torch, presented a nice appearance, and more especially imposing from the fact that the stately form of our worthy townsman, Mr. Richard Farmer, occupied the important position of drum major and he makes a capital one. He was the subject of much eulogium by the lady portion of the congregation on the street. About 8 o'clock the Opera House was comfortably filled, and at 8.30 the curtain was drawn up and the program opened with an address by the chairman, Dr. Rollins. Mr. R. H. Collins, who sang in an articulate tone of voice, a solo of choice selection. Miss Dodge of London, following in a solo full of tender emotion. The recitations by Wm. Hughes, and the comic songs by Mr. Money were well received. The duet by the Misses Dodge and Barnard of London.

Not everyone in town appreciated the efforts of the band in these years. On occasions the concerts were sometimes disturbed by noisy audiences as on the 24th of May, 1890 when a concert featuring 'whistling solos by Miss McManus' was disrupted. The house was described as disorderly. 'A pack of toughs could not be subdued' as a result only a small part of the programme was heard. The citizens of Exeter did, however, respond favourably to the band most of the time. The efforts of such musicians as F. Farncombe, Percy Verity, Tom Oke, Frank Oke and Walter Bawden were appreciated not only at concerts and parades, but also at "private garden parties".

Toward the end of 1902, however, the band was having serious difficulties in maintaining its existence and by mid 1903 the band was defunct. A grant of one hundred dollars from Council helped revive the band. Council did, however, impose the requirement that the band play at least once a week on the streets of the village. Again in 1911 the band was reorganized and flourished for another ten years playing many engagements including the London Fair

About 1920 the band collapsed again and was not revived until about 1933. Ted Walper was a principal force behind the revival; also involved in reviving the band was W. D. Sanders, J. Senior, H. O. Southcott, E. Harness, E. Davis, Ed Westcott and Clarke Fisher. This new band consisting of forty-two musicians staged a concert in Leavitt's Theatre in April 1934. As J. G. Stanbury noted, the audience was "thrilled" with the "excellence" of the band. The band operated well throughout the 1930's. Ted Walper led the band during most of this time and some of the members were:

Cornet	Stan Smith
	Allan Penhale
	Bill Stanlake
	Lloyd Cook
	Jack Brintnell
	Jim Francis
	Allan Lindenfield



The Exeter Band about 1913

Clarinet	Bill Geddes
	Allan Fraser
	Allan Westcott
	"Boots" Klumpp
Bass Horn	Harold Whyte
Trombone	Pat Skinner
	Ernie Davis
	Ed Westcott
Piccolo	Harold Elliott

In 1937 the band sponsored the presentation of "Its a Knockout" starring Harold Skinner.

The Exeter Band parading return of the militia from camp. This picture would be from about 1906

In 1939 the band was again defunct. It was a great disappointment for Ted Walper and he along with Harold Whyte and Bill Webster made a valiant effort to keep the band going during the 1940's. In the late 1940's the band was fully revived with some help from Council. New uniforms were acquired and a citizens' band committee was formed. The revival was, however, short lived and the band declined a few years later. There have been sporadic attempts by men such as Bruce Cann to revive the band but for the past twenty years or so Exeter has not had a brass band, although there has been a pipe band maintained by the Legion during this time.

So for the best part of the past century, Exeter has had the traditional small town brass band. It provided good recreation for the members and equally good entertainment for the townspeople. The leaders have included Sam Gidley, Ed. Treble, Harry Gidley, Ed. Christie, George Eacrett, Sam Hanna, and Ted Walper. Jack Mallett must hold the distinction of having the longest tenure in the band playing for 65 years under all of the leaders. Mallett was clerk and bartender at the Central Hotel.

Other musical efforts in Exeter included the Huronia Male Choir which has existed on and off for the past forty years. In 1932 for example, it was led by W. R. Goulding. Charlie Godbolt was a member of the group and was often "the hit of the evening with his imitations of Harry Lauder". In the 1940's and 1950's Mrs. H. L. Sturgis directed the group. One of the most ambitious productions was the Pirates of Penzance. Fifteen hundred people saw such locals as Bill Cochrane, Allan Elston, Harold Skinner, and many others perform. The choir has experienced a revival in recent years under Mrs. R. McCaffrey.

Patriotic celebrations were important features of Exeter's life.

33rd Huron Militia Battalion, the Exeter Company.

The band prepared for these special days with diligent practice. In the Times of June 28, 1877 it was noted that the band was practicing for the Dominion Day celebrations. Said the Times: "They played remarkably well and while out they gave our genial station master a serenade. The fire engines were out the same evening and did themselves credit." In the same issue the editor berated the village merchants. He said, "We hope the businessmen of the town will not be behind those of other places but will celebrate Canada's Natal Day in a truly loyal manner by closing their places of business; let there be no closed front door with back door business about it either. The clerks deserve all the time you can possibly give them.

Our farming friends are most to blame. ... For goodness sakes leave your eggs and butter at home when you come in to the races."

July 1 and May 24 were the two major patriotic festivals of the year. On these days the glories of the Empire and of the Canadian part of that empire were celebrated with fervor. Other patriotic days were also recognized such as coronations, jubilees, military victories and in the very early years of Exeter there is some evidence to indicate that Guy Fawkes Day (November 5) was observed. "Remember, remember the 5th of November" was not, however, a rallying cry in the streets of Exeter for very long.

A few illustrations of these celebrations are given to indicate the activities. One notable 24th of May was in 1886 although it was not any more notable than many other years. The events of 1886 are characteristic of many May 24th celebrations. Two thousand visitors joined the nearly two thousand villagers to view a "Trades and Callithumpian Parade" headed by Reeve Dr. Rollins and Councillors William Bissett, James Pickard, Johns and Hoskins, clerk M. Eacrett and Treasurer George Eacrett. Parade Marshal Castor Willis had placed these leaders of the village in an elegant covered carriage. The band, directed by Sam Gidley and led by George Bawden's dog (proudly wearing a blanket bearing the name on either side) provided stirring march music. The parade included the following: the two fire companies in full uniform, dry goods floats (Pickard and Carling) grocers floats (Farmer Bros. James Ferguson) travelling stores (Dearing and Sanders), bakers (Bell and Rossenberger) butcher (R. Davis) cooper shop (J. Gould), harness boots shoes (C. Escrett), carriage factory (J. Mutton), self binder (R. Lang), John Vail on roller skates represented the roller rink. Bringing up the rear of the parade were two mules pulling the skating rink wagon, a performing bear and a wagon load of small girls in white singing God Save The Queen.

In the afternoon the crowds moved to the fairgrounds to watch the various activities. The band played as the games went on. Some of the games and contests are noted below:

- a 300 yard hose reel race between the two companies was won by Reliance Co. No. 1 in 59 seconds.
- the bicycle race was won by F. Hess of Zurich with runners up being James Ramsay and William Gundy
- Captain McGuire's team won the tug-of-war
- The "greasy hog" was caught by Joseph Bawden
- boat races on Pickard's Pond were won by George Vosper and N. Dyer-Hurdon. Canoe races were won by E. Snell and Bob Sanders.
- track and field events included:
  - pulling light stone: A. Russell, A. McNeil

Exeter's celebration of General Buller's Relief of Ladysmith
March 8, 1900

putting heavy stone – A. Bissett, A. McNeil
hurdle race – E. Hodgins, R. Eacrett
fat men's race – T. B. Carling, A. Bissett
100 yard race (amateurs) for a silver cup presented by T. Fitton – E. Hodgins
boys' races – T. Tyndall, A. McCallum, E. Ordley
one-half mile race – J. McFadden, E. L. Braund
hop, step and jump – E. Hodgins and R. Eacrett
running long jump – E. Hodgins and R. Eacrett
standing long jump – W. A. McLean, E. Hodgins
100 yard race (open) – W. A. McLean, R. Eacrett

In the evening a skating carnival was held in the Dominion Roller Rink. In the races J. Vail won and as a result of this third win Vail kept the trophy. A. Stanlake, Mary Sanders, and Ida Gould were among the winners of prizes for costumes. In charge of the day was none other than Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon. It was a fine day with the only disagreeable element being the dusty roads.

On May 24, 1888 five thousand came to Exeter for the celebrations which followed much the same pattern as the day described above. Tom Oke was the champion racer of the day. A few drunks added a minor discordant note.

In other years lacrosse matches were included as in 1896 when St. Marys and Exeter played with St. Marys winning. In that year five teams also competed in a football tournament. Bicycle races were also a feature of the day.

Early in the century the 24th of May celebrations received impetus from the South African War. In 1901 Exeter's celebrations began at 9 o'clock with a sham battle depicting the fight at Paardeberg and the surrender of Cronge to Lord Roberts. Then followed a grand military parade depicting the entry of Lord Roberts into Bloemfontein and also celebrating the relief of Mafeking. The 33rd Huron regiment, the school cadets "with guns" and the Exeter band were included in the parade. Following the military activities were horse races and a lacrosse game.

In speaking of the South Africa War it is worth noting that in February, 1900 news came of the relief of Ladysmith. Exeter's "citizens were in a high state of jubilation." Flags appeared all over Exeter, the bells in Trivitt Church were rung, guns were fired but it was afterwards learned that the report was erroneous. Premature celebrations occurred in various places. One report reads as follows and is given because it helps convey the feelings of English Canadians as they were then:

> "Quite a demonstration was held in our school on Friday last, when our teacher Miss A. McGregor heard of the relief of Ladysmith. She tolled the bell for fifteen minutes and had the children give three

> cheers for Queen Victoria, General Buller, Gen. White, the British Army and our brave Canadian boys. Miss McGregor is a true British subject as well as a first-class teacher and we feel sure that had she been a man she would now be at the front along with the rest of our brave boys fixing the Boers, but as it is we know her heart is with them".

Exeter again celebrated the relief of Ladysmith at the appropriate time in May.

Below is the Times' report of Exeter's celebration:

> "That the good news of the relief of Ladysmith on Thursday last was received with great rejoicing in Exeter, goes without saying. Never was there a more enthusiastic outburst of loyalty and patriotism manifested in the history of the town. As soon as the news was announced, crowds began to amass, flags were hoisted, bunting stretched, the church bells set ringing, the fire alarm sounded and the whole town went wild with joy. A half holiday was proclaimed by the Reeve and the school was dismissed. At about three o'clock in the afternoon a grand procession was formed in front of the Town Hall and paraded Main Street. The procession was made up of men on horseback, among whom was a striking character of a typical representative of John Bull, in the person of our much esteemed citizen, Mr. Robert Leathorn, who sat on his charger with the grace and elegance of a Duke, and who added much to the tone of the concourse, a rig containing Dr. Rollins, Warden of the County, Reeve Bissett, and Councillors Mess. Gunn, Lewis and Armstrong; the Exeter Band; about thirty volunteers with Mr. Geo. Harness in command; a boys' brigade, hauling with them a miniature cannon; the Firemen and an immense crowd of citizens. After marching up Main Street as far as the Metropolitan Hotel, the band played several appropriate airs, the procession returned, marching down to Huron Street, thence back to the Town Hall where the parade halted and the volunteers acquitted themselves excellently in a military drill, after which several volleys were fired, preceding several rounds from the miniature cannon. The boys then sang very beautifully "Soldiers of the Queen" and the whole crowd "God Save The Queen", followed by three lusty cheers for "Bobs", Buller, Kitchener, White and the Canadians, after which the crowd dispersed. In the evening the jubilation was continued. A large procession was again formed and marched up and down Main Street with the effigy of Cronje, after which a large bonfire was started on the vacant lot opposite the Central Hotel, with the effigy of Cronje surmounting the whole. Fire-arms and fireworks were discharged in profusion and the whole town was wild with excitement."

In May, 1900 N. Dyer-Hurdon wrote to General Sir Redvers Buller to congratulate him on his magnificent performance in relieving Ladysmith. Dyer-Hurdon explained to General Buller that Exeter was composed of Devon men and was, therefore, doubly proud of another Devon hero. Mr. Dyer-Hurdon had attended Crediton Grammar School when "Squire" Buller, the

General's father had been president of the school board.

In December, 1900 Dyer-Hurdon received a reply from General Buller. In his letter the General noted that in 1864 he had been quartered in London, Ontario and had driven "Over one day to both Crediton and Exeter in order to write home from both those addresses". Mr. Dyer-Hurdon said he would keep General Buller's letter for the rest of his life. In 1901 the Times received a letter from Exeter, Devon indicating that donations for a Buller Memorial were being accepted from all parts of the empire. About the same time the firemen sponsored a visit to Exeter by Stanley M. Brown, The Mail and Empire war correspondent who had gone to South Africa with the Canadian contingent; his lecture was entitled "To Africa With The Canadians".

One other May 24 celebration that drew five thousand visitors was in 1887. "The wind blew and the rain descended in torrents" but the parade went on and is described as follows:

> "It formed at the North end Fire Hall, marshalled by C. Willis and Jas. Weekes, marched the principal streets in the following order: - Band followed by a jubilee car containing a representative of the Queen and representatives of the seven provinces of the Dominion, all attired in suitable costumes, with a guard of honour composed of twelve soldiers under the command of Lieut. Dr. H. K. Hyndman, assisted by Sergt. A. Robinson. Firemen, two companies, in uniform. Aldermen in carriages, a carriage containing about twenty small girls all dressed in white and singing at intervals, "God Save The Queen" and "The Red White And Blue". Then followed the different trades, the Indian warriors in their native dress, and the pioneer with his log hut upon an old wagon drawn by a yoke of oxen. With the exception of the jubilee car, which was really magnificent, the pioneer's

Sam Sweet's prize-winning entry in the May 24, 1887 parade

> outfit, was most unique. The old man with rifle in hand, the old lady busy at her knitting, while inside the shanty the music of the fiddle was heard, the stag horns on the roof, the coon skins on the sides, with the teamster and cattle and the tattered garments of the whole, all combined gave it a primitive appearance. Much credit is due to Mr. Samuel Sweet, for the genius displayed in the design of the scene presented by the settler's hut. Just before the adjournment at the market for dinner three cheers were given for the natives of the soil - the Indians, the city fathers, pioneers and the Queen, after which the band played God Save The Queen, and the children sang the same."

The other events were much the same as in other years with sports, and a band concert.

In 1897 Victoria's Jubilee was celebrated across the empire. An item in the Times of April 29, 1897 reads as follows

> "The National Anthem will be sung and prayers offered for the Queen on Sunday, June 20 throughout all the colonies of the Empire. "God Save The Queen" is to be sung continuously by the Sons of England throughout the Colonial Empire starting at the Fiji Islands and following the sun around the world, the anthem to be rendered in each place as the sun passes it".

In Exeter N. Dyer-Hurdon organized an afternoon of games for the children and an evening of fireworks. Later on Exeter's citizens witnessed "moving photographs" of the Queen's Jubilee procession "as it actually occurred".

Dominion Day in Exeter seldom reached the levels of patriotic fervor that the Queen's Birthday evoked. The day was usually observed by a major race meet and sports. Until 1892 the races were held in the old driving park. In 1892 the twenty fifth anniversary of Confederation was celebrated with the opening of the new driving park. There was also a football game and bicycle races. "The Exeter Brass Band supplied music for the occasion and everything passed off pleasantly." In 1927 the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation was observed in Exeter with a parade, a patriotic program and an historical pageant. In 1954 six thousand people were in Exeter for a parade, alligator wrestling and other such suitable activities for Dominion Day.

Coronations were also suitably observed in town. George V's coronation was celebrated with bonfires and fireworks at the river under Dyer-Hurdon's direction. The coronation of George VI was observed with a service at the school which included the planting of two acorns that had been sent from Windsor Forest. A religious service in Trivitt Church followed.

Over the years, then, patriotic celebrations observed the Queen's Birthday most fervently. Only minor vestiges of the 24th of May celebrations now remain. Sports and race meets usually commemorated Dominion Day.

The town's parks were usually the scene of these celebrations as was noted. The fairgrounds and race track area was first used in 1892 as a race track and has become the major sports field. Riverview Park was opened in 1913 as a result of the local Women's Institute obtaining Council's permission to plant trees and beautify the grounds which had been used for pasture up to that time. The village had purchased the land in 1908 from James Howard. At that time there were trees along the south and west sides and along the river. For the opening of the park the grounds were "beautifully decorated with Chinese lanterns and bunting." The band, under Ed Treble's direction, played and Mrs. Hastings of the Women's Institute christened the park as "Riverview Park." That night a large bonfire was made followed by a display of fireworks including paper balloon ascensions and also "The Storming Of The Fort." Dyer-Hurdon had arranged for this sham battle to be fought on the opposite side of the river. The boys in the two "armies" used roman candles. Since 1913 the park area has undergone enlargement and improvement so that it is now one of the town's beauty spots. Various groups deserve credit for the present existence of the park. The Women's Institute and the Exeter Horticultural Society, from the early years, together established the original park area, planted trees, and landscaped the area, erected the pillars on Hill Street, built the barbecue and also arranged for some dredging of the pond for swimming. The improvements to the park were not made without opposition. In 1921 the Horticultural Society was criticized for wasting money on the area. It was a dark, dangerous place according to one of the Times' correspondents. The group, headed by Mr. Buswell, that persuaded the Council not to give the park land for use as a hospital site also deserves credit. In recent decades the Town added to the park land on both sides of the river. Major improvements have been made along the river from the bridge east to the limits of the park. A swimming pool has also been added to the area. Eventually the land known in the past as the "River Commons" west of the Main Street will no doubt become additional park land, as well as the lands lying between Riverview Park and the Morrison Dam area.

Victoria Park was originally designated as a market square but it was seldom used for this purpose and the land was used largely as pasture until the 1880's when some of the villagers decided to beautify the area. The land seems to have been donated to the village about 1885 by Joseph Acheson and Isaac Carling. Dr. Lutz, Robert Sanders, Wm. Creech and others planted the trees. It evidently deteriorated again until about 1897 or 1898 when the village again made an effort to improve the area by further tree planting and the erection of a bandstand. It has been maintained by

the town as a park more or less continuously since the turn of the century although cows grazed there off and on over the years. A wading pool was added in recent decades and the large trees enhance that part of Exeter.

Federal Park, the area on Main Street now occupied by the Post Office, was the open space left when the government purchased the site for the Post Office but then failed to erect a building for many years as we noted previously. The Horticultural Society planted shrubs, trees and flowers including many zinnias. The zinnia is Exeter's civic flower.

The Horticultural Society, incidentally, came into existence in 1922 as a result of the efforts of Reeve B. W. F. Beavers, J. S. Harvey, who became the first President of the Society, J. G. Stanbury the first Secretary, G. S. Howard and S. J. Hogarth. The first Vice-President was Jean Murray. Honorary Presidents named in 1922 were Dr. Hyndman and Isaac Carling. It was the Horticultural Society that selected the Giant Zinnia as Exeter's flower. This group of public-spirited citizens not only worked on Riverview Park, Federal Park, the Community Centres Park and Victoria Park, but also improved the grounds around the Library and Town Hall. At the rear of the Town Hall where the weigh scales were located, cattle created a mess. Garbage littered the area. In the 1920's the Society cleaned up these public areas, planted shrubs, flowers and trees and provided benches in front of the Library. A garden was developed just west of the old public school. The plants were all identified with a marker. Trees were provided free to those citizens who wished to plant them. Flower shows were held and the Society did everything possible to encourage civic pride in the appearance of the village.

In its early years the Horticultural Society had over one hundred members. Dues were one dollar and the province provided a small grant as well to the society.

Popular events in the past in Exeter were the skating races and the carnivals. Both ice skating and roller skating were popular amusements. The first ice skating rink was probably located approximately where the Town Hall now stands. In 1877 the Exeter skating rink was selling family season tickets for three dollars. On March 8, 1877 the Times reported that "The rink is crowded nightly, the frosts of the past few days making skating excellent." The editor urged the people to skate, stating that it was "a healthy and invigorating exercise." There were carnival and races on this outdoor rink, but the first "skating carnival that ever took place in Exeter under cover was held in the rink in the drill shed" in January 1885. According to the report there was "a good crowd both of spectators and masked and costumed skaters". There were ex-

hibitions of fast and fancy skating and "altogether the carnival passed off very pleasantly". Messrs. James Weekes and Samuel Sweet operated the rink calling it the Royal Skating Rink. People skated to the music of harmonica, violin and guitar.

Ice skating carnivals remained popular for decades and everyone of the six rinks that Exeter has had were scenes of these colourful events. In February, 1900 a carnival was held in Bawden's Rink in aid of the Red Cross Fund. The festivities started with a parade led by the band and twenty of the volunteers captained by George Harness. The costumes in the carnival were excellent and the judges C. H. Sanders, N. Dyer Hurdon and F. E. Karn awarded prizes to Miss G. Hicks, Gerlic Kemp, Mrs. P. Bawden, W. Hern and Edgar Bissett.

Exeterites would often travel to other centres for these carnivals and races as they did in the winter of 1886 when Sam Sweet, James Bissett and Chris Willis won prizes in Parkhill. Bissett placed second in a three-mile race. Carnivals remained popular and frequent events until fairly recent decades in town. The band often provided the music.

Roller skating in the Dominion Roller Rink was popular as long as the rink stood. As we note elsewhere it existed for only about seven years. The best roller skater in Exeter in the 1880's was John Vail. In one five-mile race in 1886, George Eacrett raced neck-and-neck with Vail for seventy laps around the rink but Vail finally pulled ahead. Vail raced for money against skaters from neighbouring towns. On April 8, 1886, for example, Vail and Robert Cornyn of Wingham raced for $25.00 and the championship of Huron County. "Cornyn made a good start leaving Vail nearly half a lap behind . . . until the 30th round when Vail closed on him and at the 60th lap glided past." The race was five miles long which was 80 laps and Vail's time was 17 minutes and 15 seconds. The Times remarked that Vail had "remarkable control of his nerves" and exhibited "remarkable staying qualities". Said the Times, "five miles scarcely warms him up". It was reported that considerable money changed hands. A return race in Wingham was declared a draw. According to the report Cornyn tripped Vail as Vail passed him on the 78th lap. The "unsportsmanlike Winghamites" charged Vail $1.50 to practice. Vail challenged Cornyn to race for $500.00 in London but evidently the Wingham skater did not accept.

There was a big carnival on New Year's Eve in 1886. This event was part of Exeter's festivities that year which also included a ball and supper at the Lorne Hotel. The night ended with a brawl in the streets which Constable Gill finally terminated. The music for these roller skating carnivals was supplied by the brass band and harmonica band. The Dominion Roller Rink collapsed in

December 1892. In 1947 an outdoor rink was opened in Exeter by E. Neil. This rink ceased to operate some years ago.

Figure skating has also provided recreation in Exeter for a number of years.

Another activity that went on in the rink was horseshoe pitching. In the summer of 1929 the Dome Rink management laid out five horseshoe courts. A club was organized with Fred Ellerington as President. On May 24, 1930 a horseshoe tournament was held under the supervision of the Dominion of Canada Horseshoe Pitchers' Association. The Dominion champions were there as well as many other excellent players. Horseshoe pitching has enjoyed off and on popularity in Exeter. At present the game is not played in Exeter. The last area used for play was the rear yard of the blacksmith shop at the corner of Huron and Main streets.

Bicycle riding was introduced in Exeter in the early 1880's. Messrs. Verity, Bowerman and Gundy were among the first in the village to own "wheels". People rode all over the area. Rides to Goderich, Hensall and Dashwood were frequent. In the summer of 1886 one man got lost when he rode from Exeter to Dashwood to Khiva thence to Crediton where he stayed overnight. Bicycles scared the horses as the following item from 1884 indicates. Three Lucan boys in a buggy met a bicycle south of Exeter. The horse was frightened and threw the buggy into the ditch resulting in a broken leg for one of the boys. In 1892 a bicycle club was organized with Dr. Lutz as President and N. Dyer Hurdon as Vice President. There were twelve members including A. J. McTavish, Frank Wood, W. Browning, Ed Carley and Frank Lutz. The club was active for several years holding regular rides and entering members in various races. W. E. Browning was considered to be the County Champion in the 2 mile race. His time was five minutes and forty-nine seconds. A noteworthy ride was one by George Southcott who is reported to have ridden to Toronto and back in one day.

Other amusements were organized by the Y.P.C.A. which existed in the early 1870's. In those early years it held debates, socials, oyster suppers and so on. In 1920 and 1921 Y.P.C.A. clubrooms were established on the second floor of the old Pickard building. Men such as Frank Boyle and J. S. Harvey had gone to the James Street Church Board for support of the project. In January 1921 the rooms were opened and by May of that year a bowling alley had been installed and the rooms admirably fitted for youthful recreation. The Directors were R. N. Rowe, J. M. Southcott, G. S. Howard, Wm. Rivers, R. Welsh, F. Boyle and W. S. Cole. Various team sports were sponsored by this organization which carried on for a number of years.

Scouts also provided an activity for the youth. In 1915 R. G.

Seldon Hall tried to organize a Scout group but was not successful. By 1921 however there was an active group with Tom Pryde as Scoutmaster and J. M. Harvey Assistant Scoutmaster and W. S. Stanbury as troop leader. In the early 1920's some of the Exeter scouts went to a model camp at the Toronto Exhibition. The boys were Reg Beavers, Ted Taman, George Hind, Derry Boyle and Harold Whyte. Stuart Stanbury was the first King Scout in Exeter receiving the award in 1926. Various men have led the Scouts over the past fifty years since the first Charter was issued. Ted Buswell, Harold Whyte, Alf Andrus, Owen Atkinson, Harvey Pfaff, Don Traquair, Ross Van der Nent, Terry Lawrence, Hal Hooke, Ralph Sweitzer and Doug Harrison are some. Cubs, Rovers, Brownies, Guides and Rangers have also operated. The first Guide Company was formed in 1931 with Ruby Creech and Marion Woods as leaders.

Many other activities could be discussed here. There was a Canada Club. There were excursions by rail and boat. The introduction of new forms of amusements such as radio, phonographs and television were the occasion of village amusement. For example, in July 1904 Robert Sanders gave a free concert in the Town Hall with his new "magnificent gramophone." Mr. Wilbur Martin assisted Mr. Sanders to "manipulate the machine" as it played the 'Good Old Summer Time,' 'Lead Kindly Light' and the Vesper Service by the Hayden Quartette. In the summer of 1949 Reg Beavers' store displayed a television set and the store was a popular place as people stared at the tube. In 1946 Willards Ontario Panorama was broadcast from the Exeter Arena by Gordon Sinclair and Allan Savage who interviewed Jack Green, Mrs. J. G. Cochrane, Ed. Sweitzer and Preston Dearing.

The bowling alley was opened in 1948. The poolroom opened in 1937. After over sixty years of resistance to the evil, Exeter's governing body relented but only after the village Solicitor told Council that they could not restrict a lawful business. In 1955 when Red Scott took over the local billiard emporium he staged a Council Tournament. Mayor Pooley and Reeve Mackenzie battled over the green felt. This was a far cry from the days when Councillors would not even permit a poolroom let alone enter one.

A major feature of the Exeter scene for well over one hundred years has been the Fair. The Exeter Fair can trace its origins to 1845. In that year the London Road Branch of the Agricultural Society was established. In 1854 the Exeter Branch of the Agricultural Society replaced the London Road Branch. This organization included the people in the Townships of Usborne and Stephen. By 1857 there were 87 members and the Board of Agriculture in Upper Canada in 1857 reported that the Usborne

and Stephen Agricultural Society had good sheep, good cows and the best hogs in the County. The first fair was held in Exeter in 1854 and over the years in the 1850's and 1860's the fair was "noted for its prosperity and the number of fine animals annually brought out." The Fair has operated since then, for nearly 120 years.

The schools and churches also contributed to the Village's amusements. Separate chapters will discuss these institutions and their contributions to village life.

The remark by "The Buckley's resident sociologists" in an article in the U.W.O. Gazette said that in Exeter "the rich curl, the middle classes bowl and the lower classes play darts" does not bear examination. In Exeter almost all sports and entertainments have enjoyed the support of all social classes. Until recently Exeter's activities, like those of all small communities, needed the support of most of the population to succeed.

chapter 6

Sport in Exeter

Everybody loves a winner but it takes real civic pride to get out and support a team until it becomes a winner

(C E Boyle)

Over the years sports of various kinds have been played in Exeter. Sport provided small-town Ontario with an opportunity of making contact with the neighbouring towns. Sport provided an important outlet for the men of nineteenth century small town Ontario; men worked long hard hours but they still looked forward to participation in some form of athletic activity and the competition it provided. Women did not have the same opportunity to become involved in sports until after 1920.

Sport provides small town Ontario with an important source of the legends and myths of the small town. Every town has its sports heroes. Exeter has its share of sports heroes whose feats are recounted from time to time in the lodge halls, coffee shops and arenas: Dick Seldon's bowling feats, the three Pickard boys' hockey ability, 'Goldie' Cochrane, Tom Carling's 'no hitters', Babe Siebert, Derry Boyle (Sr and Jr), 'Boom' Gravett, Si Creech's hitting and fielding, Tom Yearley's horses, Bill Oberle, Johnny

Rether and many others would be included in an Exeter sports hall of fame.

Some towns win more than their share of Ontario or Canadian championships. Exeter has not won many championships in any sports. As far as can be determined Exeter had never won an All-Ontario hockey championship until 1972 when the Ontario Junior D Championship came to Exeter. Several teams (Intermediates in the early 1920's, Midgets and Juniors in 1971) have come close. The 1971 Novice team won the equivalent of an Ontario championship and that was the closest Exeter came to an Ontario Championship until 1972. The Exeter Midget baseball team won a provincial championship in 1956 to bring the only all-Ontario baseball championship ever to come to Exeter.

In 1950 the Exeter Maroons, a junior basketball team won the Ontario Basketball Association championship to put Exeter on the Ontario basketball map. Numerous lawn bowling championships came to Exeter in the years immediately before and after the First World War. Indeed, Exeter remained an important lawn bowling centre for twenty years or more after World War I and still boasts a fine green.

Audrey Pooley won the All Ontario Junior Badminton Championship and finished second in the Canadian Tournament. She was a citizen of Stratford at the time but perhaps Exeter can now lay claim to her athletic prowess.

There is a story (unconfirmed) that Exeter won some type of Canadian lacrosse championship in the 1890's but no information seems to be available.

Championships are not everything, however, and Exeter need not be unduly concerned that so few championships have come to the town. Participation in sports has always been maintained at a high level in the town. There have been town leagues, local tournaments, church leagues, spontaneously organized events, school sports, as well as inter-town competition. The variety of sports played is impressive and the numbers of participants equally as impressive.

It was also apparent that from the beginning of sporting activities in town (all sorts and conditions of men) played at all of the sports. Exeter, like other small towns in Ontario in the nineteenth century and early years of this century had a socially stratified community but an examination of the names of the players would reveal that members of Exeter's more socially prominent families played the various games with the less socially prominent folk. Indeed, the leadership in sport came from the men who might be described as the community leaders. Charges that certain sports were more socially acceptable than others cannot be substantiated in Exeter since one can find names from all sections of the community listed as participants in all sports.

A sketch of each of the various sports played in Exeter over the years follows.

HOCKEY

> While the game of ice hockey was in some respects solely Canadian, it was also indebted to early Europeans who developed the art of skating and to those Britons who conceived the idea of playing a form of field hockey on frozen English fens.
>
> (from One-Hundred-Not-Out, Henry Roxborough)

This game on ice was called bandy on ice and used a ball. One of the first games played in Canada occurred in Montreal in 1837. There were eight players: goal, point, cover point, centre, rover, home, right side, left side. Shinny was referred to in Kingston in the 1840's as being played by the soldiers garrisoned there. There is, apparently, evidence that garrison troops in Halifax in the 1700's played a game copied from the Indians called hurley on ice. The troops put on skates and adopted the Indians' game. There is reference to hoquet (hockey on ice) in Acadia. It is not part of this work to attempt a recounting of the history of hockey; consequently, suffice to say that by 1890 hockey had spread across Ontario and on November 27, 1890 the Ontario Hockey Association was founded. By 1900 the game of shinny on your own side though still rough was welcomed by all classes of society, from urchins playing on the streets to governors-general and silk-hatted friends sitting in regal boxes at crowd filled arenas.

It is difficult, if not impossible to determine when the first game of hockey was played in Exeter. No doubt boys played shinny on the pond above the grist mill dam during the late 1880's and some hockey may have been played on the outdoor rink operated by James Weekes and Sam Sweet on the site of the town hall, on property then owned by I. N. Howard. This outdoor rink existed in the 1870's. These two later used the old Drill Hall as a rink. It was located approximately where the present horse barn stands on the Fair Grounds. Hockey may have been played there as well in the 1880's. It is doubtful if hockey was played to any extent, though, before the late 1880's since hockey did not get started even in Toronto before the late 1880's. The rinks of Weekes and Sweet were used chiefly for skating. The rink in the Drill Shed was called the "Royal Skating Rink" and was opened for skating in 1884. There is, however, no record of hockey ever being played in this rink which was the first covered rink in Exeter. The second covered rink in town was located at the south-west corner of Andrew and John Streets. This rink, "The Dominion Roller Rink", extended from where the former R. N. Creech house stands southwards. This rink was primarily a roller rink but sawdust was spread over the boards and ice put on during the winter. Again there is no indication that hockey was ever played in this rink which collapsed on December 2, 1892, only seven years after its erection in 1885.

The first indoor rink on which hockey was played was on Peter Bawden's rink which was located on Laughall Street (Gidley East) across from where the high school now stands. This rink had a row of pillars down either side. While the skaters could skate around the outside perimeter the hockey players had to dodge the pillars. Players undoubtedly "kept their heads up" in those days. The rink was more suited for skating races, carnivals, recreational skating and curling, than it was for hockey. Nevertheless, in the 1890's hockey was played in this rink despite the hazards of the pillars.

The first organized hockey played in Exeter began in the late 1890's. On February 16, 1897 Exeter defeated Clinton 6 to 5, this game was preceded by public skating and by races. In the races John Spackman defeated Fred Hawkshaw in the two-mile event. A few games were played in 1898 with Exeter playing various nearby towns such as Hensall, Clinton, and Seaforth. One of the games in 1899 was described at length, some excerpts from this description are given:

> "A fast exciting and phenomenally close match was the result of the meeting between Seaforth and Exeter teams Tuesday night. The game was called shortly after 8 p.m. The home team however had not yet awakened from dreams of what they were going to do with Seaforth and first thing they knew the score was 1-0 [illegible] this woke the boys up [illegible] and after fifteen minutes of hard, fast work a shot by Tremaine made the score 1-all. (Seaforth then went ahead 3-1 but Exeter fought back to tie the score) A splendid rush and scoring shot by Willis brought down the house and the score stood 3-all. (Then) Tremaine got the puck carried it up the side, passed it to Evans who in turn sent it to Willis and the score stood 4-3. Fortune now deserted Exeter [illegible] and four minutes before time a shot by "Stonewall" Jackson evened the score. Now came the "most unkindest cut of all" Seaforth scored the winning goal at the exact moment that the bell called Time. [illegible] A particularly good game was put up by the defence Messrs. Gidley and Dignan."

The organization of hockey in Exeter in 1899 was the responsibility of the following men

Hon. President	Reeve Spackman
President	N. D. Hurdon
Vice President	Dr. Rollins
2nd V. President	Joseph Senior
3rd V. President	F. L. Bishop
Treasurer	R. N. Creech
Secretary	B. C. Gidley

Captain - Frank Snell
Manager - Chas. H. Snell

Managing Committee
R. C. C. Tremaine
C. H. Sanders
Frank Willis

As the century turned, hockey was operating in Exeter in a fairly well organized way. There were two town teams, a Junior and Senior team. The games were played on Bawden's Rink and directed by a committee as mentioned above. The admission charge was 15¢ for "gents", 10¢ for "ladies and children". Games were played against neighbouring villages and towns. In one game against Clinton "Mallet in goal for Exeter made some excellent stops" and "Creech at cover point proved a speedy man on his skates and handled his stick well". The Advocate observed that "The Exeter team are a quiet, gentlemanly set". The 1901 team consisted of the following seven men all of whom played the entire game in those days without a break except for the half-time period. There were two halves instead of three periods at that time. The players in 1901 were F. Taylor (goal), F. Hawkshaw (point), D. Evans (cover point) and forwards, one of whom was rover, L. Cann, W. West, B. Hooper and R. Southcott.

In 1902 the team took the name Exeter "Devons" and consisted of Digon (goal), Snell (point), Hawkshaw (cover point) and forwards Evans, Russell, Southcott, Cann and Hardy. The boys played a rough game in Parkhill one night in February and tied 5 to 5 but Parkhill was overly dirty and the "goal umpire was apparently crosseyed". The "Devons" in December 1903 were Exeter's first entry into Ontario Hockey Association play. With their new red and white sweaters the "Devons" entered an Intermediate league with the London St. Johns, St. Marys and Watford. The Parkhill Gazette, ever high in praise of Exeter observed that before the season ended the Exeter Devons would be the Exeter "Deadens". The team captain was Sandy Bawden and the Executive consisted of W. W. Taman, W. J. Heaman, E. W. Hnine and R. N. Creech. Honorary members of the Executive were N. D. Hurdon, A. Q. Bobier and F. E. Karn. The players and the executive paid a membership to belong to the club. F. Bawden provided practice time on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for the team.

The opening game was January 1904 with Exeter defeating St. Marys 5 to 3. St. Marys came by train and were late. "The work done by the home team was of first class order." Exeter's players were Myers in goal who "stopped shots that looked like winners", Ross on point whose lifting puts the puck from end to end of the rink directly on the opposite nets", it was a feature of the game; Ford on coverpoint, Bawden (rover), Hawkshaw (right wing), Hockey (centre), McColmbe (left wing). This was the first O.H.A. game ever played in Exeter. Exeter, however had less luck with the St. Johns Athletic Club of London. "The London rink was much larger and threw our boys off", and Exeter lost 5 to 1. London went on to win the League. In Junior play that year Exeter won several games against Ailsa Craig, Hensall and Clinton. The Ailsa Craig paper complained that the Exeter boys were too "rough and tough".

In 1912 hockey was given a new lease in Exeter when Mr William Leavitt opened "The Dome Rink" on the Gould property opposite the Town Hall (the present site of McKerlie Automotive). It extended back onto the property now occupied by the Legion. The formal opening took place on January 15, 1912. The Advocate reported the opening as follows:

> "The formal opening of the skating rink took place in the form of a carnival. Reeve W. J. Heaman and Rev. D. W. Collins were present and delivered inaugural addresses in which they referred to the enterprise and worthy citizenship of the proprietor, William Leavitt, in erecting such a magnificent place of amusement for those who enjoy the exhilarating pastime of skating or the rousing game of curling."

The building was of corrugated iron. It had a circular dome roof and was "one of the finest in Western Ontario with a magnificent sheet of ice, 180 feet long and 80 feet wide; 25 feet of ice was partitioned off to provide ice for curling. The rink would seat 300. In the opening carnival prizes were won by Oscar Anderson and Owen Atkinson in the mile race. Maurice Senior and Harry Parsons won in the half mile race. Costume prizes were won by Ernest Harvey (Indian Chief), Latimer Grieve (squaw), Olive and Leon Truble. The new town band was in attendance. The Bawden rink was closed when the Dome opened and was eventually converted by Ted Bawden to the manufacture of cement blocks, pillars and other concrete products. The Dome Rink collapsed in December 1927. Mr. Leavitt had rented the rink that year to Mr. Frank M. Boyle. It was re-erected and collapsed again in 1934 leaving the town without a rink. Some would suggest that the "golden age" of hockey in Exeter was lived in the old Dome Rink during the 1920's.

In any case, one of the first hockey games ever played in the Dome was between Hensall and Exeter Juniors which Exeter won 5 to 4. The Hensall Observer noted that "in the first half Hensall played the Exeter team to a standstill and Exeter seeing that they could not win by playing hockey started to rough it and if a Hensall player got hold of the puck in the second half he was lucky to come out without a few broken bones. This is usual with the Exeter bunch who are noted for being poor sports . . . The crowd managed to swipe quite a bunch of caps and gloves and everything of value left in the Hensall boys' coats".

The Advocate remarked "It is regrettable that the Hensall fellows could not take a defeat without passing all kinds of dirty insinuations in which there is not a particle of truth"

An Exeter team consisting of F. Graham (goal), H. Elliott (point) J. E. Elliott (cover point), S. Fisher (rover), T. Carling (centre), Earl Southcott (right wing) and O. Atkinson (left wing) defeated Hensall 6 to 5 in another game that year.

Hockey continued to expand and in 1914 an active Town League operated. There were four teams the Oddfellows, Clerks, Bankers and High School. All of the players cannot be named here but one or two from each team are given.

Oddfellows	Frank Boyle, J. M. Southcott
Clerks	Clarence Pickard, J. Elliott
Bankers	Allan Pickard, W. Snell
High School	Cecil Pickard, E. Southcott

In addition the Town team played various games. The 1914 team had T. Penhale (goal), R. Atkinson (defence), B. Rivers (defence), Snell (rover), Earl Southcott (centre), A. Pickard (right wing), C. Pickard (left wing). Other players included N. [illegible] Harrington and S. Elliott. In one game E. Southcott got 5 goals and Al Pickard 4 as Exeter defeated Lucan 13 to 3. In March of 1914 a team consisting of players from Zurich, Hensall, Seaforth and Toronto, under the name of Zurich, defeated Exeter. The Times said that it took these four places to beat Exeter. In that game, the Toronto man was a peach.

Throughout the decade 1910-20, Exeter's hockey teams played well. Such stars as Allan Pickard, Clarence Pickard, Russ Southcott, E. Southcott, "Goldie" Cochrane, "Tiny" Torrance ("Whose fondness for talking was responsible for opposition goals"), Rivers, Harvey Atkinson, M. Senior provided the spectators at the Dome Rink with plenty of entertainment. There were junior and senior teams and the rivalry with nearby communities was strong. If Exeter lost, the Advocate and the Times could be depended upon to comment. For example, a loss to Ailsa Craig in 1915 drew the following observations:

> The referee made a mess of things from the start . . . the visitors had come to win and the referee was out to give them everything. He never saw an offence unless made by an Exeter player. . . . Slashing, tripping and [illegible] were in order. . . . Earl Southcott was struck in the chest.

Among the players mentioned during this period were the

Pickards: Allan, Clare and Cecil. Cecil was killed in the First World War. Clare became an important community leader and Allan went to the west where he remained until his retirement. As J. M. Southcott remarked, "The Pickards, like the others, played for the love of the game. They provided their own hockey sticks and equipment, as well as having to pay for practicing at the rink." In those years, Heaman's store was selling hockey sticks for prices ranging from ten cents to one dollar. In 1916, Heaman's had a special on Automobile Skates at one dollar to five dollars.

Allan Pickard went on to become the most well known and most important hockey figure to come from Exeter. Allan moved west about 1920. He eventually became a school principal in Regina. He played hockey for various teams in the west, later coaching such teams as the Regina Aces. He held various offices in the C.A.H.A. and W.H.L. He was president of the C.A.H.A. in 1947. The Regina Leader-Post said in that year:

> "Most centres have their own Mr. Hockey but the real one is in Regina — Allan W. Pickard is president of the C.A.H.A. and controls more hockey players than any man in the world."

Mr. Pickard was recognized in 1958 as one of Canada's leading hockey figures when he was elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame. He was added to the list of "hockey builders" at the same time as Senator Donat Raymond, George McNamara, George Dudley, James Norris, Conn Smyth and Lloyd Turner. The accomplishments and contributions to hockey of Allan Pickard are probably not widely known to the younger citizens of Exeter but Exeter is proud that a native son is ranked in the Hockey Hall of Fame with the other greats of the game.

The decade closed with Exeter having established a good basis for hockey in the 1920's. An important hockey figure in those days was "Derry" Boyle Sr. who managed some of the teams. His barbershop was a headquarters for sport and as winter approached the boys met there to organize the town league and the town teams. They had lots of time in the fall since ice was frequently not ready until late December.

Frank "Derry" Boyle

or early January. The season ended in March with games often being played on water-covered ice. Of course natural ice continued to be common in most small towns and the author can remember how the kids would look forward to the coming of the cold weather and to the process of ice making in the local rink.

Early Exeter Hockey Team — Members of the Exeter hockey team in the year 1913 or 1914 were: top row, C. V. Pickard, right wing; "Tiny" Torrance, sub-goalie; inset, Clarence Huffman; Al Pickard, right wing; Bert Rivers, defense; bottom row, Cecil Pickard, who lost his life in the First Great War; Earl Southcott, centre; "Shorty" Boyle, manager; Bill Kydd, goalie, and Morris Senior.

A second member of the Hockey Hall of Fame has an association with Exeter. Charles Albert "Babe" Siebert played for Exeter or more accurately, the Exeter-Zurich Intermediate team in 1921 and 1922. Siebert was born in Plattsville in 1904. His family moved to Zurich when he was about six. He was, in addition to being an outstanding hockey player, a fine baseball player and played on the 1920 Zurich Intermediate team which won the All Ontario Intermediate Championship. Siebert played left field. He began playing hockey in Zurich but it was in 1922 that he attracted widespread attention while playing for the Exeter Zurich Intermediate team. The following year he played Junior in Kitchener and later he played for the Niagara Falls Senior team. In

HOCKEY HALL OF FAME
AL PICKARD

Al Pickard's Plaque in the Hockey Hall of Fame

1925 he began his professional career with the Montreal Maroons. He also played with the New York Rangers and the Boston Bruins where he played defense with Eddie Shore. He ended his fourteen-year playing career in 1939 with the Montreal Canadiens.

> "During his term with the N.H.L. Babe developed one of the hardest shots in the league; as both a left winger and a defenceman he scored 140 goals and assisted in 159 others. On three different occasions he was named to the first all-star team."

In 1937 he was awarded the Hart Trophy as the most valuable player in the league. In the summer of 1939 he was named coach of the Canadiens.

Tragically, Siebert never did take over the coaching duties. On Friday, August 24, 1939 he drowned at St. Joseph.

> "Shortly before 4 p.m. Siebert with his two daughters Judie 11 and Joan 10 went with Clayton Hoffman to the lake. They went in bathing by the old wooden pier at St. Joseph. When one of the children saw the inflated tire she was using for a float carried out from her depth by waves, she asked her father to recover it. Siebert swam out and was about to grab the tire which had floated about 150 feet from shore

when he shouted for help . . . Hoffman swam out (but) he could find no sign of him then . . . the search continued early Monday morning the body was recovered."

The early 1920's, then, were important hockey years in Exeter. In 1920 Exeter and Zurich combined to enter an O.H.A. Intermediate Team. "Goldie" Cochrane was named coach and Derry Boyle manager. The Advocate remarked that "Goldie" is a pro-hockey player and knows the game with the best of them." Clayton "Big Dodo" Hoffman was to be the captain. (Hoffman later became a teacher in Galt.) The Executives of the club were Major Heaman (President), Tony Wurm (Vice-President), T. R. Ferguson (Secretary) and Bill Brown (Treasurer). The home games were to be played in the Dome Rink operated by "Goldie" Cochrane's father-in-law Mr. Leavitt. Cochrane by the way, had established quite a hockey reputation before coming to Exeter. He was considered "to have been one of the four greatest hockey players ever to play in Kitchener." In 1951 at the opening of the new Kitchener Arena Frank Selke paid tribute to "Goldie" placing him in the same category as a player with Milt Schmidt, Jim Coleman and Art Hiller. Cochrane played Senior A hockey in Kitchener with the Flying Dutchmen. He played in Michigan with Houghton in an early league called the Copper League and he played for the first Montreal Canadien team in 1910. He also played in Galt. During the First World War he served with the Canadian Army and was wounded at St. Eloi. "Goldie" died in 1952.

In these early years of the 1920's Exeter was in an Intermediate Group with St. Marys, Mitchell, Goderich and Clinton. In 1921 the team consisted of Dick Harness in goal; Clayton "Big Dodo" Hoffman and Hindmarsh on defence; Clarence "Little Dodo" Hoffman centre; S. Robinson from Ailsa Craig right wing; E. J. R. Bertram left wing. Substitutes: M. Senior, Siebert, Callias, O'Brien. This 1921 team in their "nifty" green and gold uniforms won the group and proceeded to play Stratford for the honours in the Northern Hockey League Senior group. In the first game of the two game total goals series Exeter-Zurich won 6 to 4 in the Dome. "The sudden halt to Stratford's chain of victories came as a surprise to the visitors. This was Stratford's first loss of the season. In the second game Stratford defeated Exeter 6 to 2 to win the series by two goals. Two hundred fans went by train from Exeter. Bertram who checked Howie Morenz into the ice was injured when Morenz finally slashed Bertram across the knee. Babe Siebert then took Bertram's place. This may have been the first game in which the two future stars of N.H.L. Howie Morenz and Babe Siebert met in a game. The report of the game said "Morenz at centre for the home team played a fast game and was easily the best man on the Stratford team" He was a recruit from the Juniors to strengthen the Intermediates and he scored three of the six goals scored by Stratford

Besides Morenz the Stratford lineup included Malone in goal, Berger Carroll Kalterbourne, R and D Lovell. The Exeter team had McGeough in goal (Dick Harness played goal in the first game) Hindmarsh and Hoffman on defence, Bertram Hoffman and Robinson on the forward line and Siebert as a substitute. It was reported that "Sid Rankin of London, a Stratford Old Boy handled the bell and he showed that his heart was with the old town Exeter drew the heavy end of his decisions

The report of the first game noted that Siebert was "A dark horse and we are going to spring something with him very soon

Hindmarsh and Hoffman were considered to be "a stone wall a real pair of men" Bertram had "a great poke check" and Stu Robinson was a "classy player" The players of 1921 were basically the same players that went on to greater success in 1922

The 1922 Intermediate team had Cook from Hensall in goal, D Harness sub goal, Hindmarsh and Hoffman on defence with Clarence Hoffman Robinson and Siebert on the forward line Other players were McKinnon, Collins and George. The team won their Intermediate group again In the O H A playoffs the team eliminated Sarnia in the two game goals to count series losing the first game in Sarnia 4 to 2 but winning the second 11 to 6. The loss to Sarnia was on Feb 17 and was the first loss of the season Apparently the Sarnia goal keeper handled 59 shots and Cook handled 29 In the second game "They even made the fans who have been following them sit up and take notice for it was not thought that they could uncork such speed and stick handling Other comments on the game included

> "The forward line are showing some fine mixing stuff"
> "Cook played the game of his life
> "They are a bunch of all-stars
> "The defence broke up the Sarnia rushes with ease
> "A cleaner pair of players never donned a uniform"

The Intermediates then went against Kitchener in their quest for the O H A Intermediate Championship but they lost out to "a real hockey team The report of the game suggested that "our boys were off in their shooting Dodo Hoffman was out of the game "through illness Hindmarsh had a sore shoulder and the referee was poor and was booed and we think it was coming to him The Times said "The local team played a clean, snappy game and took their defeat like gentlemen

That team may have been the best team relative to the period of history that Exeter ever iced In addition to Siebert who did play in the National Hockey League it is said that Clarence Huffman also was National League calibre.

In the middle and later years of the 1920's Exeter continued to play Intermediate hockey in various leagues but did not come as close to an O.H.A. Championship as it did in 1922. In 1925 the players were Cook in goal, M. Hey, Leroy O'Brien on defence, Shaddock, H. Wells, L. Statham on the forward line and L. O'Brien and H. Hogarth as substitutes. Exeter also had a Junior team in some of the years of the 1920's including 1924 when Walper, Hey, Statham, Hind, O'Brien and others formed the team. In the latter years of the 1920's Exeter was in the "Cyclone League" with Hensall, Zurich and Dashwood. Some of the more prominent players who played for Exeter in the Cyclone League years of the 1920's were George Moir (goal), Bruce Tuckey and George Hind (defence), Harvey Pollen (centre), Pete Willard, Bruce Medd, Bill Lawson and Harvey Snell.

In addition to the Intermediate hockey and Junior hockey there were town league teams and indeed two girls hockey teams. One consisted of Florence Harvey (goal), Mildred Rowe, Mary Elworthy (defence), wings Gertie Francis, Peg Wethey, Amelia Acheson centre.

The Junior team won their group in 1930. The players were goal Bunny Ford, defence Muns, Passmore, centre Snell, wings, Creech and Joynt. Subs were Boyle, Howey and Pryde. Basically the same team with the addition of Foster and Youngblut played Junior again in 1931. In one 1931 game "Boyle bulged the twine" to break a 30 minute overtime game.

One of Exeter's players suffered a serious injury in 1933 and it took place in a friendly game between Crediton and Main Street United Churches. Harvey Pollen lost an eye as a result of this injury. In the early 30's Exeter continued to enter Intermediate hockey and Junior hockey. The Intermediate players included Dick Harness, Hap Wells, Bruce Tuckey, Derry Boyle, Russ Snell, S. Creech, Leroy O'Brien, Ed Gascho and Youngblut. The Juniors included Welsh, Passmore, Foster, Pryde, Joynt, Boyle and Youngblut. The stamina of the players was indicated by one event in 1930 when the players went by sleigh to Hensall over blocked roads. "Cats started out for the game and with digging and shovelling, pushing and pulling they got through". After the game players had to walk home to Exeter from Hensall, some not getting home till 5 a.m.

In 1934 the Dome rink collapsed for the second time and Exeter was without a rink until the fall of 1936 when the town undertook to construct a new rink. In the winter of 1936 public meetings were held to discuss building a rink. Such men as A. Traquair, George Lawson, T. Pryde, F. W. Gladman, C. V. Pickard, J. G. Stanbury, R. G. Seldon and Fred Ellerington lent their support to the project. Some prominent citizens such as W. D. Sanders opposed the project. Others also opposed the arena which was to have other facilities as well. One writer to the Times said:

> "Can we hope that the combination of skating rink, dance hall, euchre playing rooms, assembly hall and agriculture display rooms will be a success. ... Dance halls with their accompanying drinking of beer and other spiritous liquor are a curse to any town. ... Our young people are being debauched. ... Our churches are humiliated ...."

The Times Editor supported the Arena as did a majority of ratepayers who voted that the village erect the arena by a margin of 215 to 125.

The Ontario Municipal Board approved the project in October 1936. W. D. Sanders was still opposed, he noted that the town had spent five hundred dollars on relief in 1934 and in 1935, $1,016.63. Taxes were too high! The Rev. Mr. Down felt that the fair board, those wishing a school gym, and those wishing a rink "railroaded" the project through. He said it was not in the interest of the retired farmer. W. D. Sanders said the voting had been irregular. Reeve Tom Pryde who was Chairman of the Building Committee and Council supported the project and construction began in November 1937. The contractor was N. Hipel of Preston. The ice surface was 70 x 170 feet, the gym was 40 x 72 feet. The gym was to be used by the high school. It was reported to be "the only one of its kind in Ontario."

The building cost $10,000. It was paid for by a debenture issue. Debentures at par were one hundred dollars but sold for $104 bearing 4% interest. The building was erected in seven weeks. Unfortunately the mild weather delayed the making of ice until mid February. The arena was opened on Tuesday, February 16 for public skating. The first hockey game in the new arena was played between Dashwood and Exeter. The line ups for this first game were: for Exeter: Creech, defence; Ford, goal; N. Wells, defence; McDonald, centre. Wings were Willard and Cornish; subs Hockey, Laing, Dinney, Buswell, Norton, Ryckman. The line up for Dashwood included Goetz, Tieman, Restemeyer, K. Wein, W. Wein, Klump, Kellerman, Hopcroft, Guenther, Ness, Eveland. The referee was Charles Triebner. Exeter won the game on a goal by Creech.

So Exeter had a new arena. The sixth to serve the town. At the time it was built it was given a life of thirty years but it is still standing at the time of this writing. The Arena Board was to consist of three councillors, one school board member, one fair board member, and two businessmen. The arena or Community Centres

Board continued to administer the arena and adjacent park until the 1960's when a new Municipal Committee responsible for recreation, the arena and parks was formed.

For the balance of the pre-war years Exeter entered the Cyclone League which varied from year to year in its make up but usually had entries from Zurich, Hensall, Exeter and sometimes from Dashwood, Crediton and Lucan. These pre-war players included 'Si' Creech who played "outstanding hockey" and was perhaps the best stick handler on the team, Bob Dinney, Gene Beaver, Vern Heywood, Rus Snell, C. Cornish, Benny Ford, Reg McDonald, Wes Rychman and others. The Cyclone League champion from 1926 to 1938 inclusive was the Zurich team. In 1939 Hensall won the MacMillan cup symbolic of Cyclone League supremacy.

There were two town hockey leagues for boys sponsored by the Lions Club. There were four teams for boys aged nine to twelve and four teams for boys aged thirteen to sixteen. In order to play the boys had to have certification from the principal that their schoolwork was satisfactory. In addition the boys could not smoke, swear or loiter around the arena. There were a large number of players and few were suspended, consequently they must have been adept at concealing their sins since few boys could measure up in all of those categories.

High school hockey also occupied ice time during the late 1930's. The high school players included Southcott, Heywood, Ryckman, Moore, A. Fahner, W. Fahner, Baynham, Wuerth, England and others. The school team played matches against neighbouring schools.

Exeter entered a team in the Cyclone League in 1940, 41 and 42 but the league ceased to operate after the 1942 season until 1947 because of the war. The Lucan Irish won the League Championship in 1940, 1941 and 1942. The Cyclone League revived in 1947 with B. W. Tuckey as President. There were teams from Hensall, Zurich, Lucan, Dashwood, Grand Bend and Exeter. Exeter's entry was managed by "Hap" Wells. The team went on to win the League Championship. This was the first time in the history of the League that Exeter won. The team members included Andy Sterling (goal); Gerry Smith (goal); Wes Ryckman, Doug Fulcher, H. Brintnell, Doug Brintnell, Tim Sure, George Shaw, Reg McDonald, Don Brintnell, D. Prescator, Graham Mason, Ross Tuckey and others. The play-off games that year drew 800 to 900 spectators. The star player of the post war Cyclone League team was undoubtedly George Shaw. George had played in the 1936 Olympics with the Canadian team. He had played on the wartime Intermediate A team which represented Exeter in the O.H.A. Intermediate A competition. That team was called the Exeter Fliers and they played against the Clinton Sparks, Seaforth Beavers and Goderich. The Exeter players were from R.C.A.F. station Centralia and included over the years, in addition to George Shaw, players such as Young, Wright, Webb, Allan, Bradley, Gunter, Graham, Forsyth, Wazurkie, Mummery, Brennan, Tait, O'Shea, Hulle and many others. This team provided top calibre hockey for Exeter during the later war years. In 1943 the team won the group and advanced in Intermediate play against the Windsor Colonials. The Fliers won the opening game 6 to 5 but lost the series. During the 1944 season the Fliers led by Shaw won the group championship and also the championship of Number One Training Command, defeating Brantford and Mountain View. The latter team had two National Hockey League players, Claude Bourque and Pat McCreary.

One of the biggest crowds in the history of the Exeter arena saw the Fliers defeat the army team from London. The 1200 fans had been promised that Syl Apps, the great Leaf star from Paris, Ontario would be playing for the army team, but Apps failed to appear. He did, however, play for the army when the Fliers played a return match on March 20 in Stratford before 700 spectators. Apps scored one goal and had three assists. George Shaw led the Fliers in their 10-6 victory with four goals. The army finally defeated the Fliers on March 27 with Apps leading the army to a 15-5 win. There is no question that the Fliers was one of the best teams to ever play regularly in Exeter.

Hockey was slow in developing after the war. In 1945 and 1946 there were Midget and Juvenile teams in the Ontario Minor Hockey Association. The Juveniles and Midgets were guided by Benny Foth, Murray Moore, Bill Allison and Derry Boyle. The Times remarked that "Clarence will be a big help in guiding the boys". The Juvenile players included Watson, Southcott, Tuckey, Tiernan, Hayter, Wilson, Musser, Ellis, Whyte, H. Brintnell, D. Brintnell, Hennessey, Haugh and Hannigan. The Midgets included Mickle, Hayter, Waghorn, Cann, Cudmore, Taylor, Parsons, K. Brintnell and M. Brintnell. The local group included Clinton, Goderich, Blyth, and Exeter. This minor hockey program operated under the direction of Recreation Director Art Campbell and the Recreation Committee consisting of Bob Southcott, Frank Creech, C. V. Pickard, Ross Taylor, Bob Dinney and Irwin Ford. Ross Taylor managed the Midgets and Ed Hunter-Duvar the Juveniles. There were no championships won in these immediate post war years although many boys were given the opportunity to play hockey. The Juveniles had several noteworthy games in January 1946. A game against Blyth was "more fun than a Laurel and Hardy comedy" as the locals won 10-0. In a game on January 31, 1946 there was a melee on the ice when fans and players swarmed on the ice. The opposition was Goderich and the brawl started when Newcombe knocked Jim Hayter over. The arena operations in those days were directed by the arena committee headed by W. G. Medd and included J. M. Southcott, C. V. Pickard, E. M. Dignan, J. Witmer, E. R. Hopper and A. O. Elliot. W. G. Medd served on the Arena Board from 1936 to 1939.

The Cyclone League revived in 1947 and Exeter finally won the championship in that year and again in 1949. George Shaw led the team in those days. He scored four goals in the championship game against Lucan which Exeter won 10-6. That game was played in January but the ice had thawed to the point where the skates were breaking into the sawdust making it more of a slush battle than a hockey game. The 1949 team included Gerry Smith, George Shaw, Wes Ryckman, Bob Musser, Gord Cann, Doug Brintnell, Tuckey Penhale and Mason as well as Art Whilsmith, Tim Stire and Jerry Lawson. Ryckman was the captain.

Hockey and sports in Exeter generally owe a great deal to Derry Boyle who contributed more time and effort over the years to hockey and other sports than any other individual. He returned to Exeter from London after the war and helped with the minor hockey program in the late 1940's. In 1950 he handled the intermediate team. That year was an unfortunate year for hockey in every way in Exeter. There was no ice until February 1 and the team fared poorly when it did play. In March 1950 Derry wrote his "obituary to sport of all kinds forever" in his disgust and frustration. That obituary was fortunately premature since Derry Boyle has continued to provide leadership on the Exeter sport scene to this day.

In 1953 Boyle was convener of the Cyclone League even though he had resigned this job in anger after a verbal battle with Tory Gregg. The Cyclone League that year had the largest number of entries in its history. There were ten teams in the League. Exeter had high hopes for the championship. Artificial ice had been installed in the summer of 1952 at a cost of $60,000 despite the opposition of a number of ratepayers. Indeed, one ratepayer argued that "drains were more important than artificial ice," but Council went ahead with the project and in January 1953 Mayor W. G. Cochrane opened the arena with its new ice plant. A team of all-stars including George Shaw from the Cyclone League played Elmira. Elmira won the game. In addition, the official opening included a figure skating show. Ted Wasper and the Exeter Brass Band provided the music. The Intermediate team however did not do well that year and finished in sixth place.

In 1956 the Exeter Intermediate team now known as the

Mohawks won the Intermediate "A" W.O.A.A. championship under "Red" Lauder's direction; Bruce Biggart was the manager, and Lloyd Cushman the president. Council bought the players jackets and honoured the the first W.O.A.A. championship team in Exeter since 1949. In the O.H.A. semi-finals the Exeter Mohawks were eliminated by Sundridge.

The stimulus provided by the successful 1956 season led the club directors to enter Exeter in Senior B hockey the next year. The Senior B league consisted of Wallaceburg, Strathroy, Woodstock, St. Thomas, Sarnia and Exeter. The players that year included Larry Heideman, Bill Oberle, Bill McDonald, Red Lauder, Bill Wharmby, Don Gravett, Junior Dace, Bill Franklin, Bill Hayward, Earl Barton, Doug Thiel, Jack Dwyer and Gar Baker. The experiment in Senior B hockey was not successful and in 1957 and 1958 Exeter returned to Intermediate ranks winning the Intermediate "B" W.O.A.A. Championship in 1959 losing only five out of thirty five games that year. The three top scorers in the League were Oberle, Gravett, and Lauder. Also in 1959 Derry Boyle's Bantams won the W.O.A.A. Championship. Fred Lamb scored ten goals in the final game against Port Elgin which Exeter won 15 to 4.

The 1960's saw Exeter develop an expanded minor hockey program and attempt to continue Intermediate hockey. However little success was achieved by the Intermediate team and it was disbanded in the early 1960's. In addition to the good minor hockey program a town recreational league developed resulting in more people playing hockey in Exeter than ever before. A Junior team was developed which had reasonable success throughout the 1960's. In 1963 the Exeter Midgets were All Ontario finalists losing out to Huntsville. This Midget team was the closest Exeter had come to an All Ontario championship in hockey for many years. The players included Jack Glover, Mike Cushman, Gary Parsons, Callum McPhee, John Lock, Bob Burns, Allan Thompson, Tom Glavin, Peter De Vries, Larry Stire, Bob Stone, Bob McDonald, Ron Broderick, Larry Wellert, Craig Davidson, Ron Cornish, Doug Parker, Don Wright, Brian Baynham and Larry Brintnell. Lloyd Cushman was the manager and Don Gravett was the coach.

In 1962 the Bantams won the W.O.A.A. Championship and the Pee Wees won the Shamrock championship. However the important feature of the 1960's in hockey was the minor program developed by the recreation committee and the minor hockey association. Derry Boyle has been mentioned and the Times said "We shudder to think what Exeter would be like without Derry Boyle, but other men deserve recognition. L. Cushman, Don Gravett, Larry Heideman, Alvin Wellert are some but Derry kept some kind of hockey going in the days before there was very much public support for the program. Now the municipality and various organizations contribute funds and hockey is well supported.

BASEBALL

Baseball was being played in Canada as early as the 1850's. By the late 1860's and early 1870's baseball had caught on in Canada and was being played all over the country. It is, of course, impossible to say when the game was first introduced in Exeter. It is certain however, that the game was being played in the 1870's. It was popular in the village then and has remained popular ever since. Indeed, baseball is the only sport to have been played continuously in Exeter for the last one hundred years.

In some places in the 1870's baseball was considered to be ungentlemanly. It was said that, "cricket is for elders, lacrosse for younger socialites; but baseball an imported game, is just a sandlot sport usually played by undesirables." Right from the beginning, baseball was known for its "mouthiness". Nevertheless, the game's popularity spread.

In the 1870's Exeter teams played games against teams from Dashwood, Brucefield, London, Lucan, Crediton and other nearby points. One of the first recorded games was played in Exeter on May 24, 1876 between the Exeter North Stars and Dashwood. The game was played on the sports field east of the Bible Christian Church. As was common in those days the score was high with Exeter winning the contest 52 to 6. At the close of the game the clubs "adjourned to the Central" for some post-game conviviality. Games were played on the cricket grounds during the next few years. Exeter's team in the late 1870's was known as "The Beavers". In 1877 the Beavers beat the Dashwood Stars 37 to 6. Some of the players of the early years were J. Hyndman, W. Hyndman, R. Blake, J. Orr, L. Thorne, H. Elliott, R. Bissett, C. MacDonnell and J. Gill.

The sport continued to thrive in Exeter in the 1880's. In 1884 the "Clear Grit Baseball Club" with such members as Richard Eacrett, William Sanders, F. Elliott, C. Willis, J. Bawden, Frank Knight and Alf Drew had a successful year. They defeated Clinton 13 to 7, London 26 to 3 and won first prize of $35.00 at a tournament in Ailsa Craig defeating St. Marys, Lucan and Forest. The "Clear Grits" published an open challenge in the papers offering to take on all comers. Undoubtedly a little money would be involved in these challenge games.

The Exeter "Actives" baseball club was organized in 1885 with George Moir as President. Members of the club included John

McLaughlin, Peter Bawden, John Elliott, James Weekes, Alf Crew, Frank Kirk and James Pedro.

In 1886 the Club was organized as follows: President, D. Mills; Vice President, D. Davis; Treasurer, Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon; Secretary, J. Elliott; Captain, C. B. Hoskin. Executive members F. Knight, W. Andrews, James Weekes, C. Willis. The team consisted of Elliott (pitcher), Hoskins (catcher), Weekes (first base), Eacrett (second base), Bissett (third base), McDonnell (short stop), Willis (right field), Tait (centre field), McLaughlin (left field). In early July this team lost a double header to the Lucan "Irish Nine" 20 to 16, and 10 to 7. The Exeter "Times" suggested that "Lucan had eleven men with the extra two doing the greater part of the play," but the Times also was critical of the local boys. The Times' writer suggested that the boys were not interested enough to practice; they were "natural baseballists" but were too lazy. Perhaps the editor's comments spurred the boys on because in their next game they overwhelmed Mitchell 42 to 11. "The game was watched by a good crowd, including many of the elite of the town."

Lockie Tait emerged in the late 1880's as Exeter's pitching star. In a game in 1888 against Parkhill which Exeter won 24 to 13, Tait "made no less than 17 aggravate the atmosphere". The feature play of the game was a catch by Ike Carling in centre field. Exeter played in the Huron-Middlesex-Lambton League at that time.

Tournaments for money prizes were big events in the 1880's. The Exeter boys went to Seaforth on August 8, 1889 to seek the one hundred dollar prize money. Our heroes lost all three of their games losing 19 to 14 to Brussels, 18 to 17 to Clinton, and 25 to 21 to the London Travellers. The Times felt that "the grounds were too small" allowing Brussels to get "some home runs over the fence." This was certainly not fair to our heroes. Playing in Seaforth that day were Lockie Tait, pitcher; Frank Anderson, catcher; Richard Eacrett, second base; McDonnell, short stop; Shipley, first base; Bissett, left field; Collins, third base; Gidley, right field; George Anderson, centre field. The stars of the game were Lockie Tait and Frank Anderson. George Anderson had come to Exeter in 1887 and provided leadership in organizing baseball during these years. He was employed as a tinsmith by Hugh Spackman and later worked for B. W. F. Beavers. In another tournament in 1889 Exeter won the Huron County Championship and the $25.00 first prize by defeating Belgrave 14 to 6, Brussels 3 to 2 and Clinton 22 to 5.

In a May 24, 1890 Tournament in Exeter the local team won the $45.00 First prize, defeating St. Marys and the Grand Trunk Railway team from London. Tait and Dolan pitched; other players were R. Eacrett, F. Anderson, G. Anderson, Hume Bissett, McDonnell, G. Eacrett. A long remembered catch by George

Anderson was a feature of the game. Following the games there was a farmers' foot race of a half mile. The race was won by H. Tindall who took home the prize which was a Verity plough. The ball throwing contest was won by C. McDonnall and the base running contest was won by Frank Anderson.

Pick up games were common during these years. Records exist of such spontaneous games as Married Men vs Bachelors, Tories vs Grits the Band vs Unknowns. A game between the employed and the unemployed in 1894 resulted in an 8 to 6 win for the employed who had Hyndman pitching. The unemployed had an import who struck out many but the "sawed off catcher couldn't hold him". It would be interesting to know the line-ups for this game.

The late 1890's saw the games being played on the recreation grounds. The team in 1897 was called the Exeter Jubilee Stars and included Crocker, O'Neil, Spackman, Escrett, Davidson, Stewart, Ford, Creech, Bassett. There was a decline in the calibre of ball in Exeter in the late 1890's. Indeed, there was nothing to rival the great ball played by Taft, the Andersons and the others of the 1880's until the years immediately prior to the Great War.

The Exeter Baseball Team of 1909

In the years 1910-1914 the stars to emerge were Tom Carling and Frank Boyle. Carling was a pitcher and played well enough to

he offered a spot with the Brantford Professional Team but "Good Ole Tom Carling" chose to remain in Exeter. Frank Boyle sometimes was the catcher and sometimes the second baseman. In addition Boyle was a leader in organizing sports in Exeter from those years to his premature death at the age of 49 in 1936. Other players included S. Bawden, Hoskins, Bellwood, Steer, J. Bawden, Mallott, Elliott, A. Fahner, Mitchell, Heywood.

The pitching of Carling was the feature of baseball in Exeter until the spring of 1913 when he moved to Brighton. There were large crowds in attendance at ball games in Exeter in those days. Four hundred watched on June 29,1911 when Carling out-pitched "King" Fahner as Exeter downed their arch-rivals Crediton 7 to 6. "King" Fahner, reported the Times, "had a disconcerting smile but it did not stay with him throughout the game as it usually does". During the 1911-1912 seasons the "strong battery" of Boyle and Carling led the team. On September 5, 1912 Carling threw a no-hit no-run game against Clinton. Exeter scored one run to win 1 to 0 in a game played in one hour and ten minutes. Reid pitched for Clinton in the game which "fast rivalled professional ball". The Exeter line-up had R. Fahner, catcher; Boyle, first base; H. Fahner, second base; Mitchell, third base; Fisher, short stop; Elliott, centre field; Bellwood, right field; Heywood, left field.

That was one of Carling's last efforts in Exeter but fortunately for the baseball enthusiasts a new pitcher moved to town in early 1913 to take up the place vacated by "Old Tom". M. Harrington, a banker, proved that he could "handle the pill with seemingly little exertion".

Baseball continued to flourish in 1913 and 1914 with a very active town league convened by Frank Boyle and with Exeter playing in the South Huron Baseball League. The Town League was a church league with James Street Methodist, Main Street Methodist, Caven Presbyterian and Trivitt Memorial. The latter two clubs had to amalgamate because of a shortage of players. Frank Boyle was League President, W. Murray Vice President, J. M. Southcott Secretary, W. J. Heaman Treasurer and W. S. Cole, official scorer. The 1913 season was officially opened with appropriate remarks by the Rev. Mr. McAllister. Among the players involved on the various teams were Rivers, Treble, Boyle, Creech, Windsor for James Street; Stitham, McTaggart, Hall, Heywood for Main Street; and R. Bissett, H. Bissett, Senior, Dyer-Hurdon for the Trivitt-Caven Combines. Heywood pitching for James Street won the opening game over Main Street 11 to 9.

Exeter's entry in the South Huron League was a strong team with Boyle catching another great pitcher in the person of M. Harrington. The infield consisted of F. Triebner at first base, either

Boyle or F. Cann at second base, R. Bissett at third base and Dr. Campbell at short stop. E. Windsor, B. Rivers, J. Chittick covered the outfield. The team was smartly turned out in cream uniforms with blue trim, blue hats and socks.

The Exeter Junior Baseball Team of 1911. Front, R. Bissett, H. Fuke and H. Sweet. Middle, C. Heywood, S. Fisher, B. Birney and H. Parsons. Back, Preszcator, Mallett and Hoskins. Extreme back, R. Burke.

Exeter lost only one game in 1914 as Harrington led the team both from the mound and at the plate. He hit .333 and pitched outstanding games such as a 7 to 0 no-hitter over Centralia. In other games he struck out 15 as Exeter defeated Fullarton 4 to 0; he fanned 15 in an Exeter victory over Crediton. With such a season it was apparent that the South Huron League Championship should have gone to Exeter but Ailsa Craig defeated Exeter in the Championship game to win the Spalding Cup.

1914 saw the end of Exeter's second great baseball era as War came and as the Bank of Commerce transferred Harrington.

After the war and throughout the 1920's Frank "Derry" Boyle kept baseball alive and well in Exeter as he guided an expanded Town League which included the Exeter Churches as well as the Centralia Methodists, Dashwood and Crediton. There was the annual Intermediate entry in the South Huron League and a Junior team entered as well. Frank Boyle was the driving force behind both of these teams.

In 1926 Exeter won the South Huron League pennant winning 10 and losing only 2. The team that year consisted of such players as

Medd, Hind, Beavers, Lawson, Tieman, Anderson, Dignan, Taylor, Yule. In 1929 Exeter entered the Western Ontario Baseball Association with London, Strathroy, and Sarnia. Players included Medd, centre field; Cantelon, short stop; Gascho, first base; Morrison, catcher; Beavers, left field; Gettler, second base; Rennie, third base; Hind, left field, and Lawson, pitcher.

The Huron-Perth Baseball League was formed in the early 1930's with Clinton, Mitchell, Goderich, Zurich, Seaforth, Exeter, Hensall, Dashwood, Blyth, Crediton and Lucan entering teams from time to time. The League was operating with 9 teams in 1939. In that year the Creech boys, Frank and Joe along with Eugene Beavers, A. Fraser and various other players formed an Exeter entry. The 1940 Hensall entry in the Huron Perth won the Ontario Baseball Association Intermediate Championship on October 3, defeating Toronto Columbus Grads 12 to 9 in the third game of the series.

In 1947 the Huron-Perth League carried on its second post-war season in fine style with ten teams. Reeve Tuckey threw the first pitch to C. V. Pickard "who connected for a clean single over second". The members of the 1947 team were G. Robinson, Gerry Smith, Joe Creech who hit .360, Gord Farrow who hit .380, Art Campbell, Art Cann, Hennessey and Harold Holtzmann who led the team in hitting with a .412 average, Howard Holtzmann, Dinney, Moore, Harvey, Penhale and Brintnell. This team was eliminated by St. Marys.

In 1948 Elmer Bell was President of the Huron Perth Baseball League. Exeter had entries in Intermediate, Bantam, Midget and Juvenile Baseball in addition to both boys and girls softball teams.

The Huron-Perth entry in 1949 and 1950 made a dismal showing. Bob Russell made his Intermediate debut in 1949 at the age of fifteen and Fred Darling was a bright spot hitting .387 but the team finished last in both years. 1951, however saw a fourth place finish in the ten team league and a victory in the play-offs to bring the Huron Perth Championship to Exeter. The team was eliminated in the Ontario Baseball Association playoffs against Listowel. Boyle's Bantams won the Bantam Championship of Western Ontario but lost to Simcoe in the Provincial semi-finals. Bill Pollen, Terry Wade, Richard McFalls, Don Wells, Irwin Ford, Jim Russell, Bev Heywood, Pete Cowen, Chuck Parsons, Bob Taylor and Don Taylor were the players.

The Town continued to have good success in baseball throughout the early 1950's winning the Midget B, Bantam B W.O.A.A. Championship in 1952.

In 1953, the Intermediate team won the Huron Perth Championship but lost to Durham in the Ontario Baseball Association. Elson, Harold Holtzmann, Fred Darling, Mehaarg, Howard Holtzmanne, Smith, L. Haugh, S. and J. Mitro were the team members. Darling led again in hitting with a .345 average. The team repeated their victory in Huron Perth play in 1954 and finished second in 1955. Loader hit .397 to lead the team in 1955. That same year the Bantams had an undefeated season to win the Western Ontario Championship under Alvin Willert's coaching but the team was eliminated from Provincial play because Jim McDonald had lost his Proof of Age. The Times Advocate was very critical saying that "sport has been run in a haphazard fashion for several years"; the editor criticized the "rule dodging" and careless direction of sport. That small error probably deprived Exeter of a Provincial Baseball Championship. Most of the boys however did play on a Provincial Championship team the following year. In 1956 Gravett and Willert directed the Midgets to the town's very first Ontario Baseball Championship. A clutch victory over Caledonia in the final game gave Exeter the Championship. Jim Russell and Fred Hunter pitched. B. Glover, C. Blommaert, D. Kelson, D. Sillery, Jim Hennessey, Jim McDonald, A. Jackson and A. Rundle were members of the team.

Exeter continued to enter a team in the Huron-Perth League until the mid 1960's with the 1962 and 1963 years being the last years in which the team performed well. In 1962 the team won the Huron Perth eliminating Listowel in a hard fought series. Embarrassment followed however in the Ontario Baseball Association as the team lost to Campbellville 5 to 0 and 18 to 0 in one of the worst beatings the Exeter Intermediate team suffered in some years. Campbellville however had an exceptionally outstanding Intermediate team. Among the leading hitters on the team were Wright with .380, Johnson .368, Bogart .357, Wooden .465, Strang .345, Russell .291. Other players included Little, MacNaughton, Boyle, Taylor, Pfaff, McFalls, Nagle, Boyes, MacKinnon, Horton, Kyle and Carey. The same team did reasonably well in 1963 winning the Huron Perth but losing to Petrolia in the Provincial playoffs.

Baseball gradually diminished in the next few years with the last part of the 1960's seeing softball dominating the local ball park. The early 1970's have seen some effort in the revival of baseball. As with hockey credit must go to various individuals for carrying on the sport of baseball over some of the lean periods. Names like Willert, Boyle, Gravett, Fairbairn and others deserve recognition.

BASKETBALL

In the year 1891 a Canadian Dr. James Naismith from Almonte, Ontario developed a new game while teaching at Springfield, Mass. He named the game basketball since it consisted of throwing a round football through half bushel peach baskets.

The game spread to Canada in the 1890s reaching Exeter in 1899. In that year "the citizens of Exeter responded largely to the invitation of Principal Boyd to attend the basketball game at the school grounds. For the first time basketball was played in Exeter and the Times found it to be a 'quite unique and interesting' game. As the band played the villagers watched Miss Nettie Walters, Miss Robinson, Miss L. Hooper, Miss F. Gill and other young ladies in their long skirts and bloomers run up and down the grounds trying to get the ball into baskets fixed to poles."

It was to be 38 years before the next game of basketball was played in Exeter. This time it was played in the gym at the arena in December 1937 and again it was a school activity. The Exeter team had been formed by Mr. A. Fawcett, one of the teachers in the local school, and the Times Advocate said that Fawcett was to be "commended for his work in instructing the high school boys in the game". Joe Creech, Ray Creech, Ray Waghorn, Les Coates, Bob Dinney, Murray Moore, Max Harness and Ted Buswell "made a very creditable showing against a much more experienced and larger St. Marys team which won 32 to 19."

Most basketball since 1937 has been played at the high school, first in the arena gymnasium and then in the new district school gym after 1950 and presently in the new large gymnasium at the enlarged school. There was, however, a brief period during which Exeter shone brightly in Ontario Basketball Association play. The first entry was an Intermediate team in 1947 with H. Davis, D. Davies, J. Rether, A. Campbell, G. Rether, B. Davis, S. Green, G. Robertson, H. Hannigan, R. Nicol, J. Hennessey.

In 1950 a Junior Basketball team, The Maroons, playing in the arena gym brought Exeter its first and only All Ontario Basketball Championship. The players raised money to buy uniforms and equipment; they worked hard under Gord Farrow's coaching. The dedication paid off with a 116 to 57 victory over Brampton in the 2 game series. "The championship was the climax to an impressive string of victories." The players were John Rether, Murray May, Bill O'Brien, Fred Dobbs, Del Schroeder, G. Cann, R. Vanden [illegible], George Dobbs, G. Schroeder. The champions were honoured at a banquet presented by the Kinsmen Club. John Metras was the guest speaker. The team operated for the next year or two but the difficulties involved in playing in the arena gym where spectators could not be accommodated were too great to overcome. Without fans paying an admission fee there was no money and without funds the team was unable to carry on. Apparently arrangements could not be made to use the gym in the new high school so the team folded. It was unfortunate that junior and intermediate basketball could not have been carried on in Exeter especially after it had such an auspicious beginning.

Basketball continued to be played at the high school with both boys and girls teams having a significant measure of success from 1947 to the early 1960's. Space hardly permits a detailed recounting of the history of high school sport, consequently only a brief mention is made of high school basketball. The local school placed teams in the W.O.S.S.A. finals frequently during this period. In 1949 the boys lost by 2 points to Tillsonburg in the W.O.S.S.A. final; the girls had lost in 1948 in the final. In 1950 however, both the senior boys coached by Glen Mickle and the senior girls coached by Lauretta Siegner won W.O.S.S.A. championships.

Throughout the early 1950's South Huron teams won various W.O.S.S.A. championships. The senior girls' team won 23 games in a row in 1952-53 winning the W.O.S.S.A. championship both years. In the midst of several years of highly successful basketball teams at the school the Times Advocate editorially told the high school to stop playing basketball. It was detrimental to hockey![1] The school has continued to play basketball. In 1955 all four teams, junior and senior boys and girls won championships. South Huron teams continued to be successful until the 1960's. For example in 1962, the junior girls lost only one game all year — the W.O.S.S.A. final.

CRICKET

This very English game was naturally enough played in Exeter in the very early years. The Cricket Grounds were located east of the James Street Church on property owned by Snell. The first record of an organized club dates from 1874 although it would be a safe assumption to suggest that the sport was played in the village in the years before that. In 1874 however a club organized. E. W. Slinthy was President and W. Bissett, Treasurer. W. Hodgson was Vice President. The Players in 1874 included A. MacDonnell, H. White, R. Bissett, A. Sheere, H. Adams, M. C. Moscrys, R. Adams, T. Horn, T. Treble, G. Elliott. The Exeter club played St. Marys in their first match in 1874 winning 110 to 108 with Moscrys making 50 runs. The Times admired the "agile movements of the cricketers as they deftly wield with willow."

The game was played over the next 25 years with Exeter teams playing matches against various London teams including the famous "Pickwicks" and teams from neighbouring towns such as Clinton. In August, 1889 Exeter defeated Clinton 106 to 69. The Times remarked that "the Clinton team appeared to be afraid of the Exeter bowlers' fierce balls." The players in 1889 included J. R. Catling, W. E. Harding, F. Elliott, Begg, Manson, H. K. Hyndman, Goodman and Ed. Bissett, J. Elliott and C. MacDonnell.

During the 1890's the club continued to exist. Dr. Lutz served as President. The old grounds continued to be used with a rental being paid to the owner, Mr. Snell. There is little evidence to indicate that the game was played in Exeter after the turn of the century. Other sports became increasingly popular.

LACROSSE

The National Game of Canada was played in Exeter during the last 25 years of the 19th century and the first few years of the 20th century. In 1884 the Lacrosse Club's executive consisted of Dr Rollins (President), N. Dyer Hurdon (Vice President), A. Snell (Captain), B. S. O'Neil (Secretary Treasurer), D. Hooper, P. Bawden, J. Fairbairn, H. Samwell. In some years the Exeter team was entered in a league; for example, in 1897 Exeter, Clinton, Goderich, Wingham, Lucknow and Kincardine formed a league. In 1899 a junior team known as the Exeter Nationals had a very successful year losing only one game. Fred Bissett, M. Vincent, Senior and Poplestone were some of the players in the 1890's. Pick up games in the village were often very rough. In 1897 the Grits and Tories played to a 4 – all tie in a very rough game. Both F. Bissett and M. Vincent had severe injuries.

The game was played on into the 20th century with the Club being called the "Victorias". W. M. Martin, Ross Southcott, Herb Ford, Ike Bissett are cited as being among the stars of the early years of the century. Leadership for the sport came from N. Dyer Hurdon, J. G. Stanbury, R. Knight, Wm J. Heaman, J. Davis, Mac Vincent and others.

The game gradually died out in Exeter and has not been played since the early years of the century.

TENNIS

In the late 1890's and early 1900's a Tennis Club existed in Exeter. The Rev. Ten Eyck, R. C. C. Tremaine, J. G. Stanbury, W. A. Millyard, G. A. Ferguson were some of the members. For exercise the club members rode their bicycles to Hensall every Saturday afternoon. The location of the tennis courts is not clear. Some tennis was played sporadically during the first few decades of this century but the sport did not flourish in Exeter.

BADMINTON

Badminton clubs have existed in Exeter from time to time since the 1930's. Audrey Pooley while living in Stratford won the Ontario Junior Badminton Championship and was runner-up in the All Canadian tournament in 1955. In 1956 Bev Sturgis won the Senior W.O.S.S.A. Championship. There's little else of note as far as badminton is concerned. It has been played in the arena gym and the high school gym over the years.

CROQUET

This was a popular "sport" in the late 1800's. Challenge matches between Exeter and neighbouring towns were common. For example, in July, 1897 Exeter defeated Clinton [illegible] to 2 in a match played on Mr. Gidley's lawn.

CHECKERS

Inter-town matches were common in the 1890's. The great checker players of the 1890's were men such as Alf Walters, J. H. Hyndman, C. Prouty, J. Walters, R. Terry, T. Oke. Of course almost everybody played checkers in various spots along Main Street. Alf Walters' store was a favourite spot, as was the old Carling store.

BILLIARDS

This "sport" did not have much success in Exeter until the late 1930's when pool tables were finally allowed in Exeter. As early as 1876 Council had refused permission to set up tables. Poolrooms, said the Times, were "loathesome" places and "a decided evil" which the village could do without. The village did not need the "damning influence of the billiard room" where "wives are forgotten and neglected, children are forsaken, and parents despised for the ever clanging ball and cue". The Times felt that "we have at the present time evils sufficient to overcome without taking into the fold this, another giant of evil".

This was a reflection of Exeter's attitude to poolrooms over the years. Every time a request for permission to set up pool tables came before Council it was denied. The village was saved again in 1926 when the ratepayers voted no. The question of a poolroom had fallen "like a bomb" at a December 1925 nomination meeting but Exeter was saved from sin again.

However, despite the protestations of the pious, Council, upon the advice of its solicitor, granted a licence for a poolroom in the late 1930's. The town has, however, survived this incursion of sin.

GOLF

In 1928 Earl Parsons laid out a golf course on the river lands north of the fair grounds. Only boys were allowed to play. The operation was short lived, possibly only one summer. Exeter golf enthusiasts during the next several decades played at Grand Bend until the two local courses were opened in recent years.

CURLING

The "roaring game" was undoubtedly introduced in Exeter during the time of the Bawden rink. The earliest note about curling occurred in 1906. In 1911 such men as W. W. Taman, G. E. Anderson, S. Sweet, J. H. Grieve, James Taylor, E. Jones and A. Taylor were among the curlers of the village. From 1912 to the 1920's the Dome Rink was the site of curling in Exeter and in the 1950's curling was revived in the arena. In 1960 the sport had become so popular that a curling rink was built. The sport is now a regular winter pastime for many local people.

VOLLEYBALL

This sport had a brief period as an organized community sport in the 1930's when Harry Lawes and S. B. Taylor formed a club in the arena gym. Almost all volleyball since then has been played as a high school sport.

LAWN BOWLING

The gentlemanly sport of bowling began in Exeter in May, 1904 when a Bowling Club was organized. The officers were as follows: Rev. Perkins, Honorary President; L. H. Dickson, President; B. S. O'Neil, Vice President; J. G. Stanbury, Secretary Treasurer; Rev. Martin, Chaplain; the Committee consisted of N. Dyer-Hurdon, J. Davis, A. W. Horne, R. B. Samuel and W. J. Heaman. The club played on the Anglican Rectory lawn which by July, 1904 was reported to have been "in splendid condition." The first rinks from Exeter to enter the Western Ontario Lawn Bowling Tournament in London in these early years were those consisting of W. H. Leavitt, I. R. Carling, L. H. Dickson, W. J. Heaman (skip) and E. J. Christie, C. B. Snell, Rev. Collins, and W. W. Taman (skip).

Exeter Bowling 1914

In 1911 Lawn Bowling became a major sport in Exeter. In that year the present greens were opened and the first of the large annual invitational tournaments was held. The President of the 1911 club was W. J. Heaman. Other officers included W. D. Clarke, R. N. Creech, N. Dyer Hurdon, Rev. D. W. Collins, J. G. Stanbury, I. R. Carling, J. A. Stewart, S. G. Bawden and W. W. Taman. Bawden donated a trophy in that year to be awarded annually to the winning rink in the Tournament. In that year of 1911 R. G. Seldon and W. W. Taman won the Ontario Doubles Championship at Hamilton.

In the years following, large numbers of bowlers came to Exeter to take part in the annual tournament. In 1912 over 200 bowlers came to Exeter in August for the three-day tournament. The Advocate contained the following item:

> "The green is in excellent condition and is decorated with flags and bunting. A tent is on the ground and refreshments are provided. Streamers decorate Main Street. The town is alive with autos."

The Bawden trophy was won that year by a Hensall rink and was in 1913 lost in the big fire which destroyed a good part of Hensall's Main Street. The trophy was replaced and in 1913 was won by a Goderich rink. Exeter enjoyed a great time each year when the Tournament was staged. As one local poet put it in 1913:

"Hurrah! The Bowling Tournament
That great and looked for day
Has dawned and united brethren
Are lined on the green to play
That exciting game of Bowling,
"Bowling on the Green"
No truer words were ever sung
Than that song Capt. Hurdon sings."

By 1917 Exeter was reputed to have the finest "green" in Western Ontario. The great bowlers of the period included R. G. Seldon, W. W. Taman, J. A. Stewart, W. D. Clarke, C. B. Snell, R. N. Creech, N. J. Dore, T. Elliott. The "Big Four Rink" consisting of Seldon, Clarke, Taman, Stewart won more tournaments than any other rink in Western Ontario. Another successful rink consisted of R. N. Creech, W. E. Sanders, R. W. Fuke, and W. J. Heaman. The rink won the London Free Press Trophy in 1922. In 1917 a country woman criticized bowling. She wrote:

> "Last week a report of the annual bowling tournament was given in your paper. Several farmers have been commenting on these affairs and wondering how it is these men can see no better way to use their time than to bowl when men are needed to take off the crops. I know instances where women are working indoors and out, laboring beyond their strength at men's work. If some of these bowlers would give their surplus time in the field instead of the women they would be doing more for their country than at present. Why send to other places for farm helpers when there are so many sporting on the green in our own town? If farm labour is too much for their muscle perhaps they might come to the country in their motor cars in the evening and do some of the chores that fall to the women's lot in harvest time. One would judge from the number of motors on Main Street during the tournament that this was the most prosperous time in our country's history. We are told we must prepare for a crisis; must we meet it in motors?"

The letter reflects the town-country hostility which emerges from time to time.

The Annual Exeter Tournament remained an important event through the 1920's and 1930's. Bowling remained popular through the decades and in 1946 the club house was erected. The sport still attracts many and summer evenings still see activity on the well kept green on Exeter's Main Street.

TRACK AND FIELD

One can go back to Exeter's early days for examples of "track events". In the 1860's and subsequent decades challenge foot races were common. For example, in 1878 James Oke and W. Tait the hostler at the Central Hotel ran a race for a small bet from the Bible Christian Church to the Hotel. Oke won and collected the bet. T. Oke and W. Lynn ran 75 yards for $25.00 in 1886, the latter won. In 1897 Will Tolland beat Tom Oke for $25.00 and the racing championship of Exeter. "Squire" Leathorn and Sam Stanlake ran 100 yard races for $5.00 in the 1890's. Leathorn usually won. Such events provided amusement for the village and opportunities for small wagers.

Real track and field activities, however, did not occur until the high school staged field days and participated in Huron County Amateur Athletic Association meets which began in 1928. A recounting of the school track and field activities will be left to someone else. A history of athletic activities at the high school is beyond the space of this book.

Reference should be made however to Gordon Pirie's attempt in the mid 1950's to break the three mile world record. Pirie made this attempt on the high school track. He failed to set a new mark but he did come close to the two mile record. Recreation Director Doug Smith and Mayor Pooley were in charge of the arrangements and Ed Blake of C.K.N.X. radio was Master of Ceremonies.

Races and similar events were held on holidays such as May 24 and Dominion Day. Mention of these activities has been made elsewhere.

QUOITS

This game was popular in Exeter during the 19th century and early 1900's. The game involved tossing a six to eight pound iron ring some eighteen yards. The object was to have the ring drop on a peg placed in the ground or at least come close to the peg. Groups representing sections of the village played games. One such match occurred between "Market Square" and Andrew Street. The latter team won 61 to 46. The players on the Andrew Street team were J. Elliott, A. Sheere, C. Snell, F. Collins; the Market Square boys were J. McLaughlin, H. Harding, J. Leavitt and A. Dare.

Inter-town competition developed as well and in August 1904 Exeter played Seaforth on the grounds opposite the flour mill. Ed

Treble, James Grieve, W. J. Bishop and T. Boyle defeated Seaforth 114 to 92. A return match the following week was won by Seaforth 91 to 88.

SHOOTING MATCHES AND HUNTING

Recreation and competition involving guns and shooting has been popular in Exeter from the very early days down to the present. Of course, the game is virtually all gone now and hunting in the area now is, fortunately some would say, a declining activity. However, game remained fairly plentiful throughout the last decades of the 19th century and during the early years of the present century. The following reflects the abundance of game in the past. This account refers to the 1850's and 1860's.

> "Occasionally a quail and her family were brought home from the forest, placed in a wooden cage, fed and cared for, the housewife simply reaching in and taking out a fine bird when she desired to make a quail pie. One or two wild turkeys were usually shot in the swamp each fall. Wild geese were more easily procured. Although there were wild ducks, people seldom bothered with these, tame ones being plentiful everywhere. There were also many beautiful pheasants in the woods but these were seldom shot.
>
> Many black squirrels were secured in the autumn and one of these prepared as one prepares chicken with dressing and roasted, made a fine dish. Black bears and deer were numerous in the forests."

In the 1870's and 1880's great flocks of geese, ducks, plover, partridge, quail and woodcock were reported. Deer was plentiful. For example in October, 1884 Wes Bissett and his brother shot three deer in the sand hills, each weighing over two hundred pounds dressed. In those years the deer season in Huron extended from October 1 to December 15 and the duck season from August 15 to January 1. The Lake Smith area and the Pinery area attracted Exeter hunters. Indeed in the 1890's the Lake Smith Shooting Club included several "Exeterites". Even the occasional bear could be seen as late as the 1880's. In October 1884 a bear was reported in Stephen Township, one-half mile south of Exeter. Naturally enough a hunt was organized to seek out the bear. Indeed, any strange animal immediately resulted in someone wanting to shoot it. This happened in June, 1877 when Eli Snell came upon a weird creature in the "wilds of Stephen Township" two miles west of Exeter. Snell came upon the animal which had a five foot wing spread, a head resembling a fox and a pouch at its side for carrying its young. The animal flew away, however, before Snell could shoot it. The incident was reported to the Times whose knowledgeable editor pronounced it to be a "Kalong" which was reported to have a wing spread of five feet and was a native of Java. It was not reported again so presumably hunters did not come across it again.

By the 1920's people were concerned about the depletion of wild life and it was proposed that the one thousand acre block in Stephen Township between the 5th and 6th Concessions and Huron Street and the Lake Road become a game preserve. At the present time most of the species of wild life common to this area seventy or eighty years ago are now gone. Little cover remains as agriculture becomes increasingly intensive. It would seem sensible now that hunting no longer be permitted in the area.

Shooting matches were a popular activity for hunters and for those who just liked to shoot guns. Reports of these matches appeared from the 1870's on. In 1877 two teams staged a match with the losers to buy an oyster supper at the Central Hotel. The team consisting of A Sheere, A. Bissett, J Westcott, John Heywood, James Oke, John Marshall and Tom Snell had to buy the meal "prepared in the usual good style of the house" for John Woods, Tom Bissett, John Sanders, E Bissett, S Fairbairn, F W Sampson and A. Luke. In the match each man had ten pigeons; the rules called for an eight yard width and a twenty one yard rise.

Individual shooting matches were common. In 1887 for example Tom Bissett took $39.00 from W. E. Sanders in two matches. In the 1880's the Exeter Gun Club was established and competitions for medals were held. A man would keep the medal if he won it three times. In the 1890's such men as James Bissett, I. Handford, George Anderson, N. Dyer Hurdon, E. Bissett, F. Collins and A. Loudman held weekly shoots for medals. The Exeter Gun Club existed until fairly recent years although its activities were considerably reduced from those of early years.

FOOTBALL

Football (presumably soccer) was played in Exeter from the 1880's to the years just before World War One. Games were infrequent in most years although in 1891 the club was quite active. In one game against Brucefield, the contest was tied one each but the Times reported sadly "Brucefield had better uniforms". In the 1890's the Exeter Beavers and the Francistown Corncobs played some gruelling matches. The worst loss recorded came in 1888 when Seaforth defeated the home town 7 to 0. The games were apparently played on the old race track grounds.

Rugby football appeared in Exeter at the high school in the 1940's and has become a popular fall sport. But as was noted previously no attempt will be made here to deal with high school sport. Soccer has had little interest in Exeter during the past seventy years although some attempts to revive the sport have occurred at the school.

HORSE RACING

This has been a popular sport in Exeter since the very early days. In the 1870's the Exeter Driving Park Association was promoting races in the Exeter Driving Park which had been developed on property bought from Eldred Drew in 1875. On June 30 and July 1, 1876 a large meet was held. There also had been a large fall meet on September 15 and 16, 1875. There were excursion trains into Exeter on both days that summer. The Association set one thousand dollars in prizes. There were 2500 persons in attendance, 400 sitting in the grandstand. The track was considered to be "one of the best half-mile tracks in the province". There were some well-known horsemen of the area with entries including C. Handford's "Lady Beacon"; J. Rattenbury's "Brucefield Girl"; MacDonald's "Matilda". There were running races and trotting races. Races were held in the Driving Park in the summer and fall throughout the 1870's. The location of this race course is uncertain but it seems to have been on the west side of the village.

Some of the famous horses owned in Exeter in the early years included Dr. Hutchinson's "Galt Reporter", Thomas Carling's "Electricity", William Hawkshaw's "Protection" and S. Grigg's "Bay Warrior". In addition to the regular race meets challenge races between local gentry were common. Frequently the streets were used for these races.

In January or February of 1897 the Exeter Turf Club leased twenty acres from Messrs Dew and Tennant for a race track and recreation grounds. This, of course, is the present track and fairgrounds area. The Exeter Turf Club staged important race meets for the next fifty years or more. During the 1940's men like Jack Morrissey, Tom Yearley, Finch Taylor, Preston Denning, Garnet Flynn, Harry Beaver and others promoted the interests of the Turf Club. In 1946 eight thousand dollars was spent on the grounds. A new grandstand, board stand, horse barn, track and baseball diamond were built with this money, which came from the village, the Agricultural Society, the Lions Club and from public subscriptions. The 1946 meet was the first since 1941. Three thousand people saw Finch Taylor's Midnight Express driven by Tom Yearley finish in the money. Tom Yearley's Lee Grattan did not finish in the money that year but a few years later Yearley had a big winner in Argyle Grattan. Yearley lost another fine horse, Amber Grattan in the fire which destroyed the horse barn in the 1950's; five other horses also burned to death.

The local track still echoes with the pounding hooves of the pacers and trotters although the roar of the crowd is missing since all of the running there involves training only. Races have been very infrequent during the past fifteen years.

Other sports such as broomball, horseshoes, figure skating, and recreational skating and bowling have involved many participants as have all the sports mentioned here. Sports in Exeter over the years have had periods of ups and downs. For most of its history organization of sport depended on individuals as we noted. In the 1940's however, Exeter appointed a Recreation Director. A teacher at the high school Art Campbell shared his time between the high school and the recreation activity of the town. Doug Smith was the first full-time Recreation Director. He was followed by Larry Heideman, Don Gravett and Alvin Willert. The present arena is the sixth to serve the town and the only one to be operated by the Municipality. It has been managed by such men as Ralph Batten, Derry Bayle and Alvin Willert.

The guiding body for the recreational activities that are sponsored by the town is the Recreation Council or more properly termed R.A.P. Committee which administers the park facilities, arena, and recreation program. Sports and related activities, then, have been important social functions in Exeter since the beginning of the settlement and have involved people from all segments of the community.

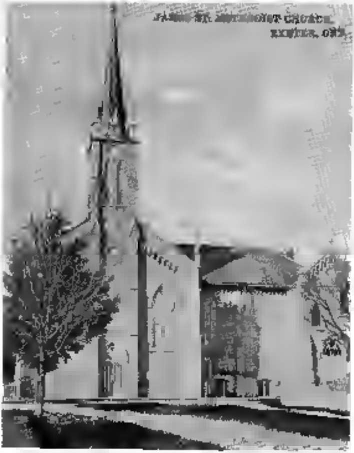
chapter 7

Churches

Over the years Exeter has had a very large representation of the various denominations of the Christian religion. The list includes the Church of England, Presbyterian, Methodist, Bible Christian, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Pentecostal, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist, Churches of Dutch origin, Mennonite, and others. Whether reports of Exeter's wickedness reached the various church leaders and missionaries "as the roar of distant thunder" and thus caused such an influx of clergy and churches is not known. Perhaps the people of the area were more amenable than some to the ministrations of the clergy of a variety of churches. In any case it would be difficult to find a community of comparable size with the variety of churches to choose from.

Basically, however, the church history of Exeter is dominated by four denominations. The Bible Christian Society and the Methodist Church claimed the adherence of a majority of the local population; this is understandable since Devonshire was the birthplace of the Bible Christian movement and was also a strong Methodist area. Most of those who were not Bible Christians or Methodists were Anglicans or Presbyterians.

The Bible Christian Society had its origins in Devonshire in 1815. Its founder was William O. O'Brien, a Methodist preacher. In 1831 an act of parliament gave legal status to the society which became known as the Bible Christian Church. This church came to the Exeter area in 1852 when the first church was built at what was then known as Adams Settlement or Ebenezer. The site is marked by a cairn located one and one-quarter miles east of Exeter on Huron Street. Prior to the erection of this church the first Bible Christian services had been conducted by the Rev. Mr. R. Hurly in the home of Mr. James Pickard.



James Street Methodist Church about 1885

On February 24, 1856 the first Bible Christian Church in Exeter was dedicated on the site now occupied by the Town of Exeter Clerk's office. This building later became Farmer Brothers' Liquor Store. Among the first members of this church were James Pickard and his wife, Richard and Ann Walsh, James and Fannie Bissett, Richard and Dorothy Handford, Robert and Margaret Frayne, Henry and Elizabeth Westcott, and John and Ann Jones. The first minister to serve the church was John Edwards, "a very godly man whose knees it was reported were callous from much praying." After he retired Edwards remained in the community staying in the May home south of the village. Included in the Exeter circuit at this time were Bethesda, Providence, Eden, Bethel, Centralia, Crediton and Dashwood. Edwards had two assistants to help him serve this circuit, these junior ministers were J. Webster and J. Tucker. The parsonage stood on Huron Street and was occupied in recent years by Mr. and Mrs. Waghorn. It was torn down a few years ago and may have been the second oldest house in the town at the time of its demolition.

In 1862 the present Exeter United Church was erected as a Bible Christian Church. James Pickard's generosity was primarily responsible for the church since he personally guaranteed the cost of the building and provided a home free of charge for the junior ministers. By the 1860's the Exeter circuit had grown to twelve preaching places. A large number of clergymen served the circuit, some of the more notable being the Rev. G. Webber and Dr. Pascoe.

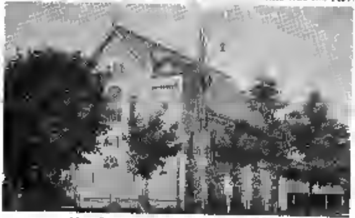
In 1884 the Methodist Church came into existence in Canada as a result of a union of various Methodist bodies including the Wesleyan Methodist and the Bible Christian Church. In Exeter ninety-four members of the congregation supported the union and nineteen opposed the move. It was reported that some of the dissenters left the church and joined the Salvation Army. Exeter, then, had two Methodist churches and when the Main Street Methodist Church burned in 1895 an attempt was made to unite the two congregations. The effort was unsuccessful but apparently a number of Main Street people who opposed rebuilding did join the James Street congregation at the time. In 1896 the parsonage on Albert Street was completed but in recent years this house was sold and a new church house erected.

The Main Street congregation did eventually merge with the James Street congregation and the Main Street Church was sold to the Pentecostal Church. This new congregation is officially known as the Exeter United Church and is Exeter's largest church. The United Church building has then gone through several denominational phases beginning as a Bible Christian Church

becoming a Methodist Church, then the James Street United Church and now the Exeter United Church.

The first Wesleyan Methodist Church was built in the 1850's on a site overlooking the river on Church Street. The church was located immediately west of the Elliott home on the higher ground. The minister at the time of the church's construction was the Rev. William Chapman. The Exeter congregation from 1844 to 1863 was part of the Devonshire circuit which included the area between Lucan and Clinton. After 1863 the Exeter circuit included Exeter, Fairfield, Lucan, Atkinson's, Farmsville, Lamport's and other points. As with the Bible Christian circuit there were a very large number of preachers serving the circuit over the years.

In 1869 the Methodists built a new church on the site of the present Pentecostal Church. Unfortunately this structure burned to the ground in March, 1895. The minister at the time was the Rev. H. W. Locke whose eloquence from the pulpit was widely appreciated and was reflected in the growing congregation. Considerable discussion followed the fire regarding a union with the James Street congregation. The Main Street people proposed a union conditional upon the construction of a new church "to be built within one year on a central location between the present sites." The James Street Board felt that the immediate erection of a new church would require "the sacrifice of too much of the material resources and moral influences of the two churches." The James Street Board proposed an amalgamation of the two congregations and the use of the James Street Church. The Board further proposed that consideration be given in the future to the construction of a



Main Street Methodist Church about 1900

new church. This proposal was completely rejected by the Main Street congregation who began immediately to plan for the rebuilding of the church. The church was rebuilt and served the congregation during the remaining Methodist years and during the years as Main Street United Church. Union of the two United churches resulted in the eventual sale of the church to the Pentecostal people of Exeter.

Both Bible Christian and Methodist clergy appeared very early in Exeter's history; however, it is probable that the first clergyman who "ever preached a sermon in this locality" was the Rev. H. C. Cooper, the first Church of England priest to work in the Exeter area. Evidently Cooper held services in Stephen Township's first school which was on Lot 15 on the London Road. The services held there would be part of the Church's attempt to bring the benefits of religion to the area when it was still very primitive. A priest like Cooper would serve a large area. In Cooper's case he served the area from Exeter to Clinton during the 1840's. Cooper's services in the Stephen school were the first Anglican services in the vicinity of Exeter. Cooper undoubtedly conducted many of the marriage services in the area because of the special legal status of the Church of England. Among other early priests in the area were Archibald Lampman, the father of the poet, and Edward Sullivan.

After 1859 the history of the Church of England in Exeter became continuous. On April 26, 1859 the first vestry meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Rev. Stearne Tighe. The meeting was held in the Exeter Union School on Andrew Street. Anglican services were held in the school and in the Orange Hall until 1861 when the first Anglican Church was opened for services. The Church was known as Christ Church and was located on Victoria Street near the house presently owned by P. F. H. Connon. The rectory was on the north-east corner of Victoria and William. The prominent laymen involved with the establishment of the church in Exeter were Dr. Hyndman, Will Case, George Case, Joseph Acheson and Henry Meakin.

By 1864 the Church was still unfinished and still not paid for and on March 28, Thomas Trivitt was given authority to notify the defaulters in payment of their subscriptions towards the funds for finishing the church that the money was required immediately. Also in 1864 some attempt was made to secure ground for a cemetery. In that year Exeter's pioneer James Willis died; he had requested that he be buried in consecrated ground but was interred in the secular cemetery. It would appear that there never was a parish cemetery in Exeter.

By 1869 average attendance at services was one hundred and eighteen. The church property by this time included the church, rectory shed and stable Throughout the 1870's the parish was plagued by financial difficulties. Isaac Carling B V Elliott and the Cases led the parish in improving the financial situation Among the clergy during the years were George Kaye Francis Ryan and Isaac Barr These clergy served St. Pauls Hensall and St Patricks, Saintsbury as well as Exeter

In 1885 S J Robinson arrived as rector he reported that "the church house, fence, and other property were in a wretched state of repair A rotting wooden fence enclosed a wilderness of weeds and undergrowth The Sunday School with seventeen pupils and three teachers was the only organization in the parish Parish finances were poor Despite the poor finances plans for a new church were started in 1887 The new church was built and on the Third Sunday in Advent 1888 the last service was held in Christ Church The rector recorded his impressions of the event

> In the evening many people sadly gathered up their books and said goodbye to the poor old walls that had sheltered them as worshippers for a quarter of a century Monday the bell came down from the tower It had tolled first for John Dew in the tower it now left and performed the same office in its new home for his brother Alfred Dew in February 1889 Never handsome never comfortable never churchly in appearance yet still it was hallowed by the prayers of a generation To what unworthy uses in a degenerate and irreverent age the old gallery and floors may be put one cannot conjecture. It never had a chance and for the [illegible] we thank God."

As the Rev H Seegmiller whom we must acknowledge as the source of this history of the Church of England in Exeter remarked, "one wonders what Robinson would have thought had he been aware of the use to which the building was put For the old church was moved a short distance to the east and was used for almost fifty years as an exhibit building for the fair It came to be called the "Crystal Palace In 1934 it was purchased and torn down by Cliff Brintnell So Trivitt Memorial Church replaced the old Christ Church

> "For the beginning of this we must go back a few years to the appointment of S J Robinson who came right out of Huron College to the parish at the age of 31 years A warm friendship grew up between him and Trivitt who was then over 70 years of age. Mr Trivitt was a medium-sized man who had inherited an ample fortune which he looked after carefully by sound investments and simple personal habits Evidently he had three main interests — birds flowers and theology An aviary filled with rare birds showed his taste for ornithology His extensive greenhouse kept his friends well supplied with flowers. He was a scholarly man, well read theologically and he held very decided opinions on both politics and religion Robinson the new clergyman, held the view that "the people of Canada need only to be shown what the Church of England is, to make a wonderful

revival". With this Thomas Trivitt agreed. This probably explains why Trivitt Memorial was built on such a grandiose scale.

Trivitt was born in Taunton Deane, Somerset, England in 1813. He married, in 1848, a lady from Norfolk County and the same year emigrated to Upper Canada where he settled on the present site of Centralia. Becoming the first Clerk of the Township of Stephen, he held that office for several years. In 1852, when the Fifth Division Court for the County of Huron was organized at Centralia, he became its Clerk. The Court was later moved to Exeter but he retained the post. In 1857 he was named a Justice of the Peace. Through his enterprise and liberality in connection with the building of the London, Huron and Bruce Division of the Great Western Railway, many permanent advantages were secured for Centralia which became a village in 1868.

Thomas Trivitt

Although Robinson makes the idea of a new church in Exeter sound like his idea, it must have been discussed at some length before any official announcement was made.

After the Good Friday service of 1887 Robinson informs us he met with the Wardens, Donovan and Spackman, in the latter's office. There he outlined the idea for a new church, "the plan being proposed by the Rector and warmly seconded by the Wardens." Mr. Donovan mentioned the subject to Mrs. Trivitt and "that faithful friend of the church in the parish enlisted the sympathy of her husband. A firm and definite plan was soon arranged by which Mr. Trivitt offered to become the donor of a new church in Exeter." On the 5th of May Bishop Baldwin was at Trivitt's home and gave his consent to the plan.

At a Vestry Meeting called for the 9th of May, Robinson, as Chairman, read the "following handsome offer" which Trivitt himself had written. Thomas Trivitt, Esquire, proposes to the Churchwardens and congregation of Christ Church, Exeter, and to the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Huron, that he will erect on the Hurdon Lot, Main Street, to be deeded to the said Incorporated Synod, a substantial and commodious new church at the minimum cost of at least $5,000, any outlay beyond this amount to be entirely at his own option. The size and style of architecture to be decided upon by a building committee composed of the Bishop, the Incumbent, the two Churchwardens, and the Donor, assisted by the advice of competent architects, as well as of the congregation occasionally called together by vestry meetings for that purpose (the said Churchwardens and congregation undertaking to provide the said site, properly drained and prepared for building and also everything necessarily required within said church when built, such as heating, lighting, seating, etc., together with the appropriate church organ) when being guaranteed the following conditions viz. — First, that the said Church for all time be called and known as "The Trivitt Memorial Church" — and second that the Donor be allowed to have permanently placed within said Church as soon as consecrated, and at any spot he may choose, either a window or mural tablet with this inscription, or its equivalent, viz:

> "This Church was erected by Thomas and Elizabeth Trivitt as a grateful memorial of the many Divine favours conferred upon them, and was consecrated for the worship and service of God by the Right Rev'd Maurice Scollard Baldwin, D.D., Lord Bishop of Huron, on the   day of   A.D. 188-."

To this was attached in the Bishop's own handwriting these words:

> "May 5th, 1887 — I heartily approve of the above and trust that God's blessing may rest upon the undertaking."

A resolution sponsored by A.A.C. Donovan and B.S. O'Neil was passed unanimously by those attending the meeting. It said:

> that we, having heard Mr. Trivitt's proposition to erect a church on the Hamlin lot, Main Street, Exeter, do hereby heartily approve of and accept the same and we also do hereby guarantee that all the conditions shall be fully carried out in every particular.

A second resolution proposed by E.V. Elliot and George Kemp also passed without dissent:

> that we present our hearty thanks to Mr. Trivitt for his very generous offer to erect a new church and that we will do our utmost to carry to completion the said church in a manner worthy of so munificent a donation.

The Wardens were empowered to begin negotiations for the site of the new building. The meeting closed with the singing of the Doxology led by Mrs. Kemp and by prayers by the Rector.

The Wardens were successful in obtaining from Thomas Hamlin two lots each 50 feet wide north of Gidley Street. An Exeter man, Welsh, was given the contract for draining and excavating the land. On this property a street 50 feet wide was opened between Main and Andrew Streets. The Wardens were to interview the Town Council to see if that body would be willing to accept "Baldwin Street" and keep it in repair.

On April 2nd, 1888 the church people at the annual meeting agreed that "this parish from Easter 1888 be known as "The Parish of the Trivitt Memorial Church".

The cornerstone was laid by Bishop Baldwin on the 1st of August 1887 according to the service appointed by the Provincial Synod. Mr. Trivitt read an address to the bishop and handed him an engraved trowel with which his Lordship "well and truly in the name of the Eternal Trinity laid the foundation stone". Those present included Archdeacon Marsh of London. The Reverend Messrs. Craig of Clinton, (The Rural Dean), Downie of Lucan, Magahy of Seaforth, Kerr of Mitchell, Thomas of Ailsa Craig, Bridgeman of Hensall, Freeman of London (the Curate of the Cathedral), Dr. Rollins who represented the Town Council, and the ministers of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. The choir was accompanied by an orchestra conducted by Mr. Samuel Gidley. In the cornerstone were placed papers, coins, etc. Also enclosed were papers prepared by Trivitt, Elliott, and W. J. Carling. The collection from the "immense crowd", Robinson noted, was $74. To conclude the day the visiting clergy were entertained by the Rector "at his residence".

The plans for the church were drawn up, at a cost of more than $1[illegible], by the firm of Peter Jones and McBride of London and are a replica of a portion of Exeter Cathedral. The contract for the brickwork was awarded to Howard, Dyer, Evans and Heaman. Nobbs of London did the cut stone work, and W. H. Reynolds of Hensall was responsible for the woodwork. Painting, glazing, and everything else was the work of the London firm.

The building of the church was under the architect's supervision. It is a fine specimen of early Gothic architecture, consisting of a nave, transepts, chancel, and tower — all substantially built of local white brick. Ohio sandstone trimmings are liberally used throughout and every opportunity of creating a massive and solid effect was utilized. The bosses, finials of the towers, and some portions of the belt courses and the five lion crosses which finish each gable, are beautifully carved. The northern entrance is by a handsome open porch while the main entrance on the western side of the tower is through a double arch of lofty height and beautifully moulded. Each arch is supported on a pair of New Brunswick granite pillars with carved capitals.

Inside the walls are sand finished and painted. The woodwork is of white pine stained an oak shade. The interior dimensions are: nave, 75 by 38 feet; chancel, 25 feet square; transepts, each 25 by 14 feet. The seating accommodation is 600 and with extra seats, 1000.

The tower is solid and massive, 17 feet square outside, not including the buttresses. It rises to a height of 92 feet. A spiral oak staircase in the turret at the southeast angle leads from the vestibule to the first floor. From here to the top of the tower is reached by a well-built staircase. The belfry was specially built to hold a set of chimes.

The chancel rises three steps above the floor of the nave and contains the organ loft on the north side. The ceiling of the chancel was panelled in squares, painted blue with gold stars and forming a groined arch over the organ loft. The door to the east of the organ loft leads to the crypt or basement where the coal cellars and gas lighting machines used to be. A temporary Vestry was placed under the organ loft.

Trivitt Memorial Church was opened on the 23rd of December 1888 one week after the closing services in Christ Church. The bell in its new home rang for the first time that morning at 7:30 to call the people to the first service — Holy Communion, at 8:00 o'clock.

The largest number of Communicants, sixty-one, in the history of the Parish were present. During the balance of the day three more services were held. At each of them Bishop Baldwin preached to congregations overflowing the seats; 650 at eleven o'clock, 850 at a Confirmation service in the afternoon; and 1200 in the evening — a total of 2700 persons. The offering, Robinson pointed out was $350.

A Vestry meeting was called for February 15, 1889, at which the church furnishings committee reported on their activities and considered with the people "the means to be adopted for raising the funds necessary to discharge the liability incurred for ... the seating, lighting, warming", and otherwise furnishing the church". Application was made to the Synod Office for permission to sell the old church property. A committee consisting of Spackman, Archer, Mill, E. H. Fish, and N. D. Hurdon was to solicit funds with which to meet the indebtedness. The stipend was raised to $800 per annum; Mr Lambrook, the Sexton, was to receive $125 a year.

On May 10th the debts were: Haag, $209; Reynolds, $324; Lambrook, $20; Byrne, $125; Hamlin, $208 (on a note held by him); other notes in the hands of a Mr. Bell totalled $3100 and a Mr. Whitlock for $1400. With the addition of a bill for $10 for gasoline, and a few other outstanding debts the total owed by the parish was $3782. Against this were promises of $460 which would reduce the indebtedness to $3322. This was not to mention the $100 owed on the matting "for which the Busy bees are working" or the $874 still owing on the organ "which debt is being provided for by the Ladies Guild".

In October 1889 one of the Minutes of the Meeting stated that the members present "heartily sympathize with Mr. Trivitt in the trials he is at present enduring for the Church's sake and we trust that he may be spared to surmount them all and complete the work by Divine Providence allotted to him to fulfill". The trials were in connection with a lawsuit brought against him by Nobbs, the stone mason. No more information is available but it may be that the difficulty concerned the tower which, it is thought, was not finished at the same time as the rest of the building.

But Trivitt was not yet finished with his generosity to the parish. At a special meeting on the 17th of February, 1890, the Rector announced that Mr. Trivitt had offered to provide $2000 for a Rectory, $2000 for a school-house (Parish Hall) and a Vestry, $2000 for the purchase and installation of a Peal of Bells, and $6000 which at his death was to be used as an Endowment Fund. In consideration of this the Synod agreed to pay him 6% interest on $4000 of the latter amount during his lifetime. Further, the congregation was to apply the proceeds of the sale of the old Rectory and grounds against the cost of the new one, including the furnace. It was Trivitt's wish that the new buildings conform as nearly as possible with the architectural style of the church. To these things the Vestry Meeting agreed and the Rector, Wardens, and B. H. Collins presented the proposals to the Executive Committee of the Diocese for their approval.

The first child baptized in Trivitt Memorial Church was Frederick John, son of the late Samuel Littlejohn. Mary Anne Clarke and James Flynn were first to be married within its walls. The first funeral service was conducted for Alfred Dew.

The church was consecrated by Bishop Baldwin on the 31st of December 1889. There was "the usual trouble about seats" (whatever that was!) Robinson reported in his summary of the year's activities. There was, as well, an unusual one regarding the organist. This last trouble was settled by Mrs. Trivitt with a large personal outlay for the cause of Christian peace — we deem that an ungodly and mischief making woman caused the trouble and a pious and peace-loving woman settled it.

Trivitt Memorial Church about 1899

We have no way of knowing whether this difficulty, whatever it was, contributed to Mrs. Trivitt's sudden death on December 23, 1889 which, incidentally, occurred exactly a year to the day after the church was opened. Robinson called her "the lady bountiful of Exeter for many years." He continued: "With sad hearts we laid her to rest beneath the chancel on the last day of the year." (The same day as the consecration of the church.) "The stone vault may hold the lady till Jesus comes but the life upon earth by its example is speaking still. O, the dreary future without her. She gave of her means, she laboured for the church, a noble woman, a faithful wife. While she lived we felt that sainthood was a reality." Bishop Baldwin gave the funeral address to a congregation that filled the seats and the aisles.

Anticipating a few years, we find that her husband joined her in 1894. He died on the 18th of July at the age of 82 and was buried beside his wife in a vault under the chancel of the church. This service was conducted by Bishop Baldwin, assisted by Robinson (who had moved in the meantime), Shore of Lucan, and the Rector, E. W. Hunt. Brass plates on the floor now mark their place of burial.

The church has continued to serve the parish. There have been many problems for the parish in maintaining such a large and imposing church but somehow the Anglicans of Exeter have continued to meet the costs of so doing. A comment is perhaps needed to explain the greater detail given about Trivitt as opposed to the other churches. The explanation is simply that the author used the history of the church done by Dr. H. Seagmiller, a former rector. No such detailed history exists for the other churches and the author was unable to meet the deadline for publication and also do the necessary research on the other churches.

The first Presbyterian congregation was organized in Exeter in 1861 by the Rev. John Logie. The nearest Presbyterian church to

The First Presbyterian Church in Exeter. This Church also served as a Roman Catholic Church for a time.

the Exeter area was the Rodgerville congregation and the distance and poor roads dissuaded the Presbyterians from Exeter from attempting the trip very often. The first services were held in Francistown in a store near the corner. Services were held here until 1863 when a church was built on the north side of the river on the west

side of Main Street. The indebtedness incurred by the erection of the church was wiped out by 1867.

The first minister, John Logie, had come to Canada from Scotland and served in a number of localities in Southwestern Ontario. He remained in Exeter until 1875.

In 1876 the present structure was built under the leadership of the Rev. A. Y. Hartley. The church was named Caven Presbyterian Church after the Rev. Dr. William Caven, then Principal of Knox College. By 1883 the church had about 75 members from 35 families.

In 1883 the Rev. W. M. Martin arrived from Norwich. The church was now a separate charge. In 1885 the Manse was built.

In April, 1893 a windstorm blew the roof and tower off the church but the small congregation struggled to rebuild the church in its present form.

The Rev. Martin remained in Exeter for 26 years. His family included his son William Melville Martin who eventually became Premier of Saskatchewan and later Chief Justice of that province. Martin was succeeded by the Rev. S. F. Sharp who died suddenly just before services in April, 1918. Since 1918 nine ministers have served the congregation which has grown to over one hundred families.

The original Presbyterian church was acquired by the Roman Catholic church in May of 1878. The number of Catholic families in the village was small but nevertheless the church was purchased and on Sunday July 21, 1878 "the opening and dedicating services were held. The building was well filled. A large number were from the parish of Offa while a considerable sprinkling of the congregation was composed of Protestants of Exeter." The services were conducted by Rev. Father Kilroy from Stratford and Rev. Father Brennan. In his sermon Father Kilroy thanked the "Protestants for their subscriptions toward the church and assured them he would pray that they would be able to see the true religion of Jesus Christ."

The history of the Roman Catholic Church in Exeter is quite vague. The Catholic community in the village was small and the church was probably closed a very few years after its opening. The Roman Catholics of Exeter were members of the parish to the south of the town and have remained so to the present.

"The Grand Salvation Army
will
Open Fire on Exeter
on
Saturday, June 7, 1884
Heavy Firing

will be heard
Blood and Fire Brigade
under orders."

With this advertisement the Salvation Army made its first impact on Exeter. The army contingent came from St. Marys under Captain Barley. The Army was active in Exeter for the next several years. They drew large crowds of "country folk" to their services for a while with their "God glorifying and Devil defeating services" where the rules prohibited chewing tobacco, laughing or talking.

The Army was not popular in Exeter, however. During their parades and services its members were pelted with apples and other items. On one occasion one of the "soldiers" was "hit hard on the head while praying". Boys "kicked up a racket" during services and on October 30, 1884 the soldiers were pelted with snowballs. But as the Times remarked "the valiant warriors loved persecution so the boys were trying to make them happy".

In October, 1885 one letter to the Times complained as follows:

> "For over a year now the S.A. has had undisputed sway in Exeter. During that time, almost every night has witnessed their parade, with drums beating, flag flaunting, and a most discordant sound, which, in their enthusiasm they call singing. Numberless horses have been frightened by that drum and flag, and numerous serious accidents have been narrowly escaped. Some day, when some terrible or fatal accident occurs as a result, the people will wake up to the fact that the methods of worship adopted by the Army are an unmitigated nuisance. During these dark nights when people are driving on the streets, there is a great deal of positive danger. But the army appears to have no respect for anybody's rights or privileges but their own."

The Army stayed on nevertheless staging "grand real fights with the Devil", the Hallelujah Guards singing songs of Victory and generally attacking satan and sin. Their vehemence finally led Council to forbid the Army from beating their drums and singing in the streets. Said the Times "the noise of the Army has been a disgrace to the place ever since they came here". In July, 1886 a fight between one of the soldiers and a young Sanders lad resulted in the soldier being felled by a blow to the temple with a large stone wielded by Sanders. By October, 1888 the Army had 20 adherents in the village. There are few records available but the Army may have owned the building on James Street which had served as the old fire hall and jail. During the 1880's and 1890's they met here or in one of the halls above various stores. The Army disappeared in the village for a number of years after the 1890's but reappeared again briefly in the 1920's.

The only other church that existed in Exeter in the 19th century

seems to have been a small Baptist congregation which was in existence in the 1880's. There are very few references to this group and a Baptist church did not exist in the town until very recent years. The Pentecostal organization appeared in the 1930's when the Pentecostal Mizpah Theatre made periodic appearances in the village. Pentecostal tent meetings with their "Red Hot Evangelism" were held in Exeter during the early 1940's and in 1947 a Pentecostal church was established. The congregation grew to the point where it was able to purchase the old Main Street Methodist Church a few years ago.

With the post war Dutch emigration to the South Huron area churches of Dutch origin were established in the community. Since these are of fairly recent origin no history will be given for these churches or for the small Seventh Day Adventist congregation which has existed for several decades in Exeter.

The central place of the church in the social life of the community continued throughout the nineteenth century and for the first half of the twentieth century. During these decades virtually everyone in the community was closely associated with one of the churches. As we noted in previous chapters social and recreational activities were organized and sponsored by the churches so that people not only worshipped in the churches but also spent a good deal of their free time in church-organized activities. However the churches no longer occupy the primary place in the social and recreational life of the community. Dwindling congregations and changing social patterns have resulted in a diminishing influence on the part of the various churches on the lives of the people not only in Exeter but throughout the country.

chapter 8

Schools

Far too many youngsters are loafing about this town who should be in school The village is breeding tramps and criminals for every idle boy or girl is a potential scoundrel'
(The Exeter Times)

The ideal of greatness and magnitude in the history of the world has ex sted with the people of Exeter in the railroad and in the new school building The school is truly the best schoolhouse in the country

This item from the Times was referring to the school that was built on Victoria Street west of the present elementary school in 1875 A description of this school written by George Fenwick is given below

> 'Our antipathy was aroused because we were being prepared to resume our studies at school But previous to our actual entrance Billy Thomas and I had gone on a quiet mooching trip to the brick school house, the purpose of which was to see how the land lay figuring, of course, on the possibility of occasionally sneaking out on truancy expeditions that we might get longer breaths of fresh air for our lungs

> and more freedom for our legs and to get away from the grind of the school room. But after looking over the proposition we came to the conclusion that things did not look very promising. For the school grounds were entirely enclosed with a six or seven foot board fence divided in the centre for the boys and girls play ground. We also observed that the windows of Mr. Gregory, the headmaster, looked out upon the only entrance to and from the grounds. We concluded that this added a double hazard to the possibility of our making a getaway. Later we learned this to be a fact when we saw with our own eyes the sternness of his features and with what persistency he hung about the entrance to the schoolhouse during the recess period always grasping in his hand a vicious looking strap in which he took a too great delight in wrapping about the shoulders and legs of any pupil guilty of the least infraction of the school rules."

M. M. Rosebrugh was the first principal of this school but he resigned shortly after the school was opened to enter into a partnership with Mr. Vanduzen in a drugstore. This school which served Exeter for 75 years was erected to replace the old school house which had been located on an acre of land on the east side of Andrew Street just north of Victoria Street. The old Andrew Street school had three rooms and must have been opened in the late 1850's or the early 1860's. In addition a junior room was held in a house where Miss Elston taught.

The first school in Exeter was S.S. 5 Usborne and was located in Francistown. It had been opened in the late 1830's and was also the first school in Usborne Township. The first teacher in this school was "Thomas Taylor an Englishman whose education and ability left nothing to be desired. He was a man of scholarly appearance, middle aged and a bachelor. ... Taylor took up his residence in the log school house." Eventually Taylor assumed in addition to his duties as schoolmaster the work of Township Clerk of Usborne. "After some years when Thomas Taylor was considered by many a very efficient fixture in the community, his pupils arrived one morning and found an empty school house. Everything was in perfect order that morning. ... There was no sign of a struggle, no sign of foul play, nor had there been anything in Taylor's manner the day before to indicate that anything out of the ordinary was about to happen. ... And nothing ever was found to indicate what had happened. No one had encountered him on the road. There was no evidence that he had been killed and no indication that he had committed suicide. He simply vanished without a trace."

In any case, these little school houses, S.S. 5 Usborne, Stephen No. 9 and the Andrew Street school house served the educational needs of the village until the new school was opened in 1875. The last principal in the Andrew Street school and the first principal

in the new school was Mr. Rosebrugh. The trustees of the old school house during its last years were James Pickard, William Sanders, J. W. Broderick, David Johns, Isaac Whitlock and John McDonnell. These men were also the first trustees of the new school.

One of the first problems faced by the Board of Trustees in the new school arose when one of the teachers, Miss Logie, caused a considerable furor in the village. The Times reported that Miss Logie "instead of using entreaty and persuasion, . . . has been using a large stick, in the one end of which was fixed a nail driven through the stick, sharpened at both ends and protruding at either side. With this instrument the scholars were punished repeatedly by this innovator of school rule". Miss Logie was reprimanded and allowed to continue her duties on probation but without her instrument of persuasion. The Board also faced complaints that it was not keeping the public informed of its action. In 1875 the Board spent the "enormous sum of $9000" and "the parties who pay the piper" were expressing in the columns of the Times dissatisfaction with the Board's failure to provide the public with all the financial facts.

No secondary level of education was provided in Exeter during these early years. Seaforth and Clinton had collegiates and those Exeter scholars who wished to continue their education beyond the entrance year had to attend school in either Seaforth or Clinton. By the mid 1880's there was a growing feeling that high school education should be provided in Exeter. In 1888 the Times pointed out that Clinton, Seaforth, Goderich, Mitchell and Parkhill had high schools. The young people from Exeter who wanted to go to high school went to school in these towns "at great expense, also at risk of injuring their morals". It was not until the late 1890's, however, that any high school education was provided.

But the elementary education that was available was good according to the standards of the time. By 1878 Thomas Gregory was principal; his salary that year was $625. The staff included Miss J. A. Spitzer, Miss E. Hicks, Miss J. Butcher, Miss A. Henderson and Miss H. Shram.

These teachers' salaries ranged from $225 to $275 per year.

Gregory remained the principal until 1889. In 1888 he had been highly commended by the Advocate:

> "As a result of indefatigable industry and keenness of purpose Mr. Thomas Gregory, principal of Exeter Public School succeeded in establishing a record which has never been equalled in the annals of a public school teacher by passing fourteen pupils for entrance to high school. . . . As a teacher Mr. Gregory is amiable and warmhearted and yet firm and resolute . . . ."

Despite this performance Mr. Gregory was dismissed as prin-

The Exeter Public School built 1875

cipal in 1889. The village was considerably stirred up over Gregory's dismissal and over the appointment of G. H. Tom as principal. There was opposition to Gregory's dismissal and there was great opposition to Tom's appointment. If a new principal was needed the feeling was that George Holman's application should have been accepted. As one ratepayer wrote:

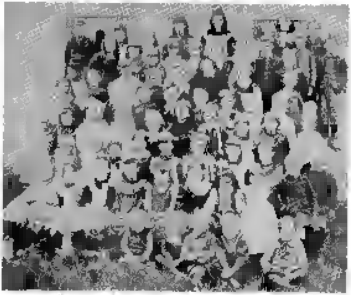
> "Phat is the trustees doin? Begad, I think theyre makin fools of themselves. Hirin a boy for $600 when they could git plenty of good men at $500. Sure every spalpeen of a scholar in town knows that their fathers and mothers aint satisfied. . . . Ive nothin agin the boy. Hes a decent boy enough. . . ."

Another letter said:

> I must protest against the recent action of the trustees in securing the services of Mr. G. Tom as principal of our school. Not that I have the slightest objection to Mr. Tom in his proper place.

Tom did not remain principal for long in Exeter. By the early 1890's T. A. Brown was the principal. Mr. Brown resigned in 1894 and Mr. Lockhart became headmaster. In that year Exeter public school had 405 pupils. In addition to the principal who taught the 38 pupils in the senior fifth class, there were five other teachers.

Miss Gregory had fifty-six pupils in the senior third year; Miss Waldrond had seventy-one pupils in the senior second. Miss Pringle had seventy-one pupils also in a senior second class. Mr. R. Ferguson had seventy-five pupils in his class. Miss Clara Vosper taught the senior fourth which had thirty-seven pupils. Miss Vosper continued to teach in the Exeter Public School until January 23, 1919 when she resigned after thirty-six years in Exeter. Before that she had taught four years in Winchelsea. Miss Vosper died at the



Miss Pringle's Room, Exeter Public School, 1894

Top row Tom Harris, Annie Jones, Annie McAnsh, Ada Hedden, Jessie Gould, Flossie Freezcater, Myrtle Taylor, Belle Treble. 2nd row Mabel Newton, Myrtle Gould, Ethel Armstrong, Nina Carling, Georgie [illegible] Snell, Louise Carling, Harold Bissett, Mary Husston, T Smale, Roy Leathorn. 3rd row Billy Toll, Garnet Heywood, Grover Bissett, Earl Browning, Wm Snell, Jennie Quance, Lottie Elliott, Mabel Southcott. 4th row Bert Piper, Frank Howard, Shirley Bobier, Art Wood, Bill Sowerby, Eldred Elliott, Leslie Freezcater, [illegible] Taylor, Bertie Marion. 5th row Edna Dow, [illegible] Box, Olive [illegible], Hazel Dignan, Olive Quance, Elliot Elliott, E. Brooks, Winnie Carling, George Armstrong. 6th row Mary Snell, Flossie Taylor, Ruby Treble, Ruth Rollins, Mary Parsons, Veda Handford, May Wood, B. Muir, Joe Vosper. 7th row Edna Follick, Ethel Cobbledick, Vera Cobbledick, Elsie Sutton, Ethel Piper, M. Newton, Jessie Matheson, Bertha Snell, Charlie Dyer. Bottom Ed Vosper, H. Howard, E. Smale, J. Elliott, Bert Muir, J. Howe & Tom Carling, E. Horn

age of ninety-two in January 1951. A plaque commemorating her service to the Exeter Public School hangs in the present school building.

By the turn of the century, S.J.A. Boyd had succeeded Lockhart as principal. Also by this time the school had a High School Department. At this time pupils were able to do the work of the first three forms of high school in Exeter. This enabled them to complete the work necessary for the Junior Matriculation. Until about 1910 Ontario had a four-year high school program. Forms I and II were called Lower School and Forms III and IV were termed

Upper School. Completion of Form III gave the Junior Matriculation. Pupils who wanted Form IV still had to leave Exeter to attend school elsewhere. From about the time of World War One to 1921 Ontario had a six-year high school but six years were never offered in Exeter. Indeed there was no Form IV until 1921-22. In 1921 the Ontario High School program was reduced to five years and in 1926-27 Exeter introduced the fifth year.

Principal Boyd resigned in December 1901; he left Ontario for Hannah, North Dakota where he took over the local newspaper "The Hannah Moon". Boyd was popular and must have had quite a sense of humour because in September 1901 he placed an advertisement in the Times which read:

> "The young man who lost his handkerchief while stealing plums from Principal Boyd's orchard can have same by calling at Mr. Boyd's residence."

The teachers on Boyd's staff at the turn of the century included Misses Vosper, Gill, Pringle, Waldrand, Robertson and Ball. The enrolment in 1901 was 363. Boyd was succeeded by Mr. Anderson who remained for one year only leaving in June 1903 "for a more lucrative position in business". The Times commented that "it is to be regretted that there are not better inducements in the profession to retain the ablest teachers".

In 1904 commercial education was added to the High School Department when Mr. W. T. O'Brien was secured as Commercial Master to teach shorthand, typing, bookkeeping, law, banking and penmanship. O'Brien left Exeter shortly thereafter to open the O'Brien Business College in London. A Mr. W. J. O'Brien operated the Exeter Commercial Night School during the early years of the century.

It was the practice of the Board to advertise for students. The advertisement shown below is from 1903.

> "The Exeter Public School Board beg to announce that a limited number of seats in the High School Department are now available for the fall term, application for which may be made to the secretary Mr. Gregg. ... No mistake will be made by parents in committing their children to the care of the staff. ... The object of the Board is to have our town never less than *foremost* as the center of educational work."

During the period 1910-20 the Exeter High School Department had several principals including W. B. Weidenhammer, George Spahr and W. Eadie. Some of the teachers during this period included Misses Lulu Edmonds, Estelle Craig, Campbell, Viola Dobson and Quinn. The Chairman of the Board at the time was S. Martin. The Secretary-Treasurer was Miss Kate MacFaul.

Space does not permit an exhaustive treatment of the history of

school activities over the years. There were many activities for example the High School Literary Society provided the community with a variety of entertainment. In 1910 the Society staged its programs in the Opera House with debates, choirs, music and drama. The Executive that year included W. Millyard, Lillie Robinson, Evelyn Gill, Herbert Gregory, Millie Martin, and Percy Hardy.

Then, as now, everyone was concerned with what should be taught in the High School. Teachers' Institutes debated such topics as "how to develop a taste for the beautiful? Or "how can we secure independent work among our pupils?" A letter to the Advocate suggested that the school's job was to teach students to be clean, polite, respectful, obedient, truthful, diligent, honest, pure, moral, and manly. Teachers' salaries were constantly under consideration. In the early years of the century, for example, the following comment appeared:

> "Teachers' salaries were taken up by Miss Jean Murray of Exeter and Mr. Norman Geddes of Belgrave. They showed conclusively that teachers are inadequately paid, their work is the noblest, they are training young minds for eternity and yet they aren't paid as well as many uneducated persons who are in other walks of life. The teachers felt that the psychological moment had arrived to do something and those present decided that a minimum salary of $700 should be received by beginners. This should be increased by $50 a year until $900 is reached for the fifth year's salary."

The salary suggested does not seem excessive when the teacher was responsible for classes as large as seventy five. Supervising the work of the pupils, preparing their slates and exercise books and taking care of all of the other scholastic matters required considerable diligence. In addition, the lighting, heating and ventilation were the responsibility of the teacher as well as the care and maintenance of the outhouse. It was also recommended that the teacher examine the fingernails and teeth of her pupils each morning. If neglect was found, marks were to be deducted.

One of the institutions associated with Exeter's schools for many years was the Grigg store. J. M. Southcott described the store as follows:

> "The Grigg store was principally a book and stationery store and catered to the schools and pupils of the district.
>
> In those days each pupil was responsible for the purchase of all his school supplies. At the beginning of a new term the scholars would be presented with a list of the books and supplies that would be required.
>
> There was always a stampede to the Grigg store where the demands had been anticipated and they were ready to meet [illegible] We would hazard a guess that with human nature what it is, and with Miss MacFee's unalterable opinion that there were no bad children

that everything that left the store was not paid for. Every child to Miss MacFaul was a dear or a darling.

If a family was in straightened circumstances Miss MacFaul never refused them credit. However, what the public did not know was that Miss MacFaul had the backing of the Board and where an account could not be collected the School Trustees paid it."

E J Wethey

Principal
Exeter High School
1920-1942

E J Wethey came to the High School Department as principal immediately after the First World War. He had served in the army as a sergeant major. Wethey's early education was obtained in Cobourg. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Trinity in 1898 and a Masters Degree from the University of Toronto in 1910. He taught in various schools throughout Ontario including the Carleton Place High School where one of his pupils was Captain Roy Brown of the Royal Flying Corps. Brown was the World War One ace who shot down Baron Richtofven. Wethey served as principal in Carleton Place from 1911 to 1920 except for the war years. Wethey was a mathematics scholar of note at the University having won a Prince of Wales prize and a Wellington Scholarship.

Mr Wethey came to Exeter then in 1920 at a salary of $2200. The High School Department had 116 pupils and 3 teachers H M Millar, Margaret Ross and Annie Dorrance. Wethey established a reputation as an excellent mathematics teacher. Over the years he also acquired the reputation of being a bit of a character. He served the school and the community well retiring as principal in 1942 being succeeded by

H. L. Sturgis. Wethey remained on staff as a mathematics teacher until 1944 when he retired after a total of 45 years in the teaching profession. He died in 1951 at the age of 74.

During his principalship Wethey initiated the Commencement Exercises. The first Commencement at the High School was held in January, 1922. A description of this Commencement is found below

> "The first Commencement of the Exeter High School was held in the Opera House on Friday January 13 with Mr F W Gladman as chairman ... The chief speaker of the evening was Col Walter J Brown of Western University and his address on 'Education For Citizenship' was interesting and instructive. The musical and literary numbers for the program were given by pupils as follows piano duet Mabel Johns and Helen Dignan, recitation Veran Walker, violin solo Kenneth Stanbury piano solo, Margaret Gladman
>
> The presentation of certificates and diplomas were made by Mr H. J Wethey Mr W G. Medd presented the following with scholarships, May Abbott, Marion Woods, Kenneth Stanbury, Margaret Wethey Harry Greb, Emalie Hogarth and J Edgar Thompson.
>
> A gold medal was presented to Emalie Hogarth ... the valedictory was given by Emalie Hogarth."

At the time Wethey was appointed as principal of the High School Department the public school principal was G. S. Howard. Howard's staff included Misses Murray, Kinsman, Taylor and Medd.

The early 1920's saw a reorganization of the Board. The Public School Board was replaced by the Exeter Board of Education in 1921. The members of the first Board were F. W. Gladman chairman, Canon A. A. Trumper, R. N. Creech, E. M. Dignan, J. G. Stanbury, J. S. Harvey and James Grieve. Miss MacFaul was Secretary. The Board began seriously considering improvements to the school in 1923. The public school had five rooms and a sixth room was urgently needed. An assembly hall was needed and above all it was felt that the time had come for "the abolition of that moral and physical abomination the outdoor toilet. Our school needs the sanitary lavatory". In 1923 the High School had six rooms and in addition a science laboratory. Major improvements such as a gymnasium were considered to be necessary. The villagers however were not amenable to any large expenditures on the school. Throughout the 1920's various proposals for improving the school were considered and abandoned because of a lack of support. The basement of the library was used as a primary room because of the crowded conditions at the school but no additions were constructed and the school remained overcrowded.

It was not until 1939 that a new building was erected. In that year

Exeter High School Teachers, 1925

Miss Bain Miss McKenzie Miss Hale Miss Rose

the central part of what is now the public school was built as an additional High School facility. The High School continued to use space in the old building as well as the new school.

The next major change in Exeter's educational system came in 1946 when the Exeter High School Area was formed. The new Board met in 1947 and consisted of Dr. H. H. Cowen, Chairman, J. H. Jones, E. L. Mickle, James McAllister, George Hess, A. W. Morgan, Edward Chambers and E. R. Hopper. R. N. Creech was Acting Secretary. The former Exeter Board had purchased in 1946 an old R.C.A.F. building. This building measured 24 feet by 35 feet and provided another classroom. This building came to be called the "chicken coop". So the new Board inherited a High School consisting of four buildings viz., the old school erected in 1875, the building erected in 1939, the arena gymnasium and the "chicken coop". Public School children used the old 1875 school with the primary room being held in the basement of the library. Not only

were new elementary school facilities needed but a new area High School was obviously required but caution was the rule as the Times suggested:

> "No one need be either unduly alarmed or unduly elated as the county fathers have a way of proceeding cautiously for they are well aware that change is not necessarily progress. Let it never be forgotten that the little red school house has been for many a long day the nursing mother of the men who have made Canada great."

After several years of operating the Exeter school as described above the area high school board opened a new school in 1950. The cornerstone laying had taken place on June 8, 1949. Since then three additions have greatly enlarged the High School so that it can now accommodate comfortably about eleven hundred pupils. The Public School has also been enlarged several times with additions being made to the 1939 structure. In the 1960's a Separate School was built so that Exeter is now served by a modern Secondary school and two Elementary Schools.

The old school was demolished in 1950. As Tom Collingwood remarked "She was a hard old school to work with."

chapter 9

The Municipality and the Town Leaders

> *Gentlemen, I congratulate you on your election to the honourable position of the governing body of the Village of Exeter and may our labours be crowned with harmony and good will.*
>
> *(W. D. Sanders, Reeve, January 1937)*

There have always been people in Exeter, as in every other municipality, who are willing to devote time and energy to provide the leadership for the municipality. Council, Cemetery Board, Public Utilities Commission, Board of Education, Board of Health, Library Board, Recreation Committee, Planning Board and various other agencies require people to serve and fortunately there are always some people available to perform what H. W. Tuckey described as "thankless jobs". Twenty-five men have served as head of the municipality, twenty as Reeve of the Village, and five as Mayor of the Town of Exeter. Many, many others have served on the Council and on other boards.

In 1873, men like James Pickard, Isaac Carling, and William

Verity assumed the leadership roles. On January 28, 1873, a formal petition from these men and others was presented to the Province of Ontario. This petition asked that the unincorporated villages of Exeter and Francistowe be incorporated as a separate Municipality. On March 19, 1873 the Legislature passed, for the third time, Bill Number 148 and on March 29, 1873 this Act was given royal assent and the Village of Exeter was incorporated. The basic reasons for the wish of many inhabitants of the two villages of Exeter and Francistown to incorporate were firstly, the combined populations of the two villages was about one thousand, secondly, the railway was coming and the people of the two villages had met in a public meeting and had directed that a bonus be granted to the railway by the village of Exeter if it was incorporated. It is quite probable that an incorporated municipality would have been formed if the railway had not been built but incorporation would probably have been delayed. The construction of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway was the immediate and direct cause of the incorporation of the Village of Exeter.

The Village was formed by taking the south half of Lot one, Concession One, Hay Township, the north half of Lot 20, Lots 21 to 25 inclusive in Concession One of Stephen Township, and the north half of Lot 15, Lots 16 to 20 inclusive and the south half of Lot 21 in the First Concession of Usborne Township. The census of 1871 showed that the Usborne part contained 277 people, the Stephen section 532 people and the Hay section 35 people. In April 1874 the Village and the three townships agreed on these figures, Hay 35, Usborne 280 and Stephen 600. The new village assumed one-twenty fifth of Stephen's debt and one-twenty-seventh of Usborne's debt.

Michael Eacrett

The new village under Returning Officer William Bayley acclaimed Isaac Carling as Reeve, and the following men as Councillors: James Pickard, William H. Verity, John Trick, Edward Drew. The new council met on April 15 in the Orange Hall. The oath of office was administered to the new council by Justice of the Peace Joseph Atkinson. Joseph Acheson and George Kilpatrick were named assessors. The first Treasurer appointed was Robert Sanders, C. Senior was named Tax Collector and Michael Eacrett was the Clerk. Eacrett remained Clerk until August, 1898. Eacrett was born in Ballybritt, Ireland on August 12, 1837 and migrated with his parents to Hay Township. Eacrett travelled around the United States and then returned to Exeter in the period after the Civil War. He eventually became foreman of the paint department at the Verity works. When Verity moved to Brantford, Eacrett also moved. He worked until 1914 when he was forced to retire because of impaired sight. He returned to Exeter where he died in February, 1926.

The first By-law passed by the new council of the new village was enacted on April 28, 1873 and was a By law to restrain "horses, sheep and other animals from running at large". The By-law prohibited horses, bulls, oxen, sheep, goats, pigs and geese from running at large. Cows were not prohibited and for decades cows at large remained a problem in the village. The fines provided in the By law called for 25¢ per horse, bull, ox or pig, 12 and one-half cents per goat or sheep and 5¢ per goose.

In 1873 the auditors John Renton and John McDonell reported the following:

Receipts	Licenses	$ 193 00
	Borrowing	500 00
	Fines	6 00
	Gov't School Grant	140 00
	Statute Labour	82 00
	Taxes	2042 53
Expenses	Local Purposes	$2007.48
	School Grant	961 10
	County	221 31
	Balance	$ 673 64

The tax rate for that first year of incorporation was 8 mills. The license income in 1873 came from tavern licenses, shop licenses, livery stable licenses and from one visiting side show. Among other items of business completed by that first council were appointments of various municipal officials. John Southcott was appointed poundkeeper; the pound charges per day in 1873 were for horses 75¢, for bulls, oxen, cows, heifers, steers 50¢, for pigs 50¢, sheep 25¢, geese 5¢. The fence viewers were George Mutlart, Richard Gidley and Isaac Whitlock. William Sanders and John Gill were collectors of statute labour commutation. The Road Commissioner was George Hodgins. William Sanders was the issuer of licenses.

During the next two or three years the Councils appointed

various other important officials, such as, bell ringer R. Welsh at $30.00 per annum, north end pound keeper R. Thomson, assessor Sam Handford $30.00 per annum. In these early years Charles Senior received $30.00 as collector of taxes and M. Eacrett received $75.00 as clerk treasurer.

In 1888 the salaries paid to various municipal officials were clerk $120.00, treasurer $30.00, assessor $50.00, constable $325.00. Said the Times proudly, "This municipality will compare favourably with any with regard to low salaries." In 1887 the village's total expenditures were $6905.41 of which education used $2463 or about 40%.

The early councils met in various locations including the Orange Hall, the School House, and the Market House. Council did not have a permanent home until 1887 when the Town Hall was built. In 1886 the people had voted with a majority of 91 in the affirmative to have Council proceed with the erection of a town hall. It was constructed by Ross and Taylor for $3895. The interior was finished and the furnishings provided by S. Gidley. The total cost eventually reached $8000 including the cost of the land. The property was purchased from J. N. Howard after council had considered the corner where the library was built and the south west corner of Main and Victoria Streets. The situation which finally brought about the erection of the town hall was the need for better court facilities. Ironically the court in recent years moved from the town hall because it was considered inadequate.

Construction of the town hall gave another boost to the village and prompted the Times to say "we want another railway, a high school, more manufacturing." The Times went on to say that "Exeter is known throughout the world and we think the Times is responsible." The talk of a railway was prompted by the possibility of a CPR line from St. Marys.

People were proud of the new town hall. It signified Exeter's growth and progress. The new town hall had a clock with wooden works built by George Hess of Zurich in 1887. The clock was kept in running order by Thomas Fitton in the early years and continued to keep Exeter's citizens informed of the time until recent years. It is now in disrepair. In addition to the clock on the town hall there was a bell. The bell-ringing job eventually became associated with the administration of the town weigh scales and cattle yards located behind the hall. In 1901, for example, George Kemp first and then James Dennis took the job for $40 per year. The bell was rung at 7 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m., 6 p.m. and for curfew if required. A curfew called for children fourteen and under to be off the streets by 9:30 p.m. In 1902 council rescinded the By-law because it was too difficult to enforce.

Nomination meetings took place in various places until the Town Hall was built. For example in 1878 at a nomination meeting held in the Market House nine men were nominated for council. This meeting produced various comments about Exeter emerging as a "very smart village" in five years. One unfortunate note was mentioned by Eldred Drew. He "deprecated the sectional feeling which seemed to pervade the two ends of the village. If such an unfortunate condition of affairs were allowed to continue we should soon find the village the loser. The only way to secure the lasting prospects of the village was by all working harmoniously together". This sectional feeling continued to exist between Exeter South and the North end for decades. Indeed, the feeling has not yet totally disappeared. The North end, or Francistown, seemed to be regarded as the less desirable area although it is difficult to be sure of the reasons for this.

Town Hall about 1890

Apparently there was something wrong with the 1878 election and a second nomination was held on Feb 1 before the village had a government. Second nominations occurred several times but there was always a willing group to serve as a council After the election in these early years the clerk would publicly announce the elected in the street

The clerks of the municipality provided continuity for the councils and over the years only six clerks have served the village and town Michael Eacrett was mentioned In August of 1898, George H Bissett assumed the duties of clerk he resigned in April 1905 and was succeeded by Joseph Senior who held the office until January 20 1911 when he was succeeded by T B Carling In May 1915 Senior resumed the duties of clerk and remained in office until August 14 1941 when he resigned after a total of thirty-two years as clerk He had taken a leave of absence in 1936 for four months during which time Amelia Acheson acted as clerk Senior had worked for thirteen Reeves and was honoured at a banquet in October 1941 C V Pickard was chosen as clerk to succeed Senior Mr Pickard served for about 25 years and was succeeded by Eric Carscadden

The various other municipal offices such as assessor collector and so on were held by many people over the years and no attempt will be made to record these office holders The heads of the councils are shown below and the councils for each year are also shown below

HEADS OF COUNCIL

Isaac Carling	1 year	1873
George Willis	2 years	1874-75
Wharton Hodgson	1 year	1876
Lancelot Hardy	9 years	1877 1885
J A Rollins	7 years	1886-1891 1893
W Bawden	3 years	1894 1896, 1910
T H McCallum	2 years	1895 1909
A Q Bobier	4 years	1897 1906, 1908
T B Carling	2 years	1898 1903
H Spackman	1 year	1899
W G Bissett	4 years	1900, 1901 1904 1905
W H Levett	1 year	1902
John W Taylor	4 years	1911 1914 1915, 1916
W J Heaman	2 years	1912, 1913
B W F Beavers	7 years	1917 1923
W D Sanders	8 years	1924-1927 1934 1937 1939
Chas. B Snell	2 years	1928-1929
B M Francis	4 years	1930-1933
T Pryde	2 years	1935-1936

B.W Tuckey	10 years	1940-1948, 1951 (mayor)
A.J Switzer	2 years	1949-1950
W G Cochrane	3 years	1952-1954
R E Pooley	7 years	1955-1961
E. Simmons	3 years	1962-1964
J H W Delbridge	10 years	1965-1974

COUNCILS OF EXETER 1873 1972

1873
Reeve —Isaac Carling
James Pickard
William H Verity
John Trick
Edward Drew

1874
Reeve —George Willis
W H Verity
J Trick
J Pickard
E. Drew

1875
Reeve —George Willis
W H Verity
E. Drew
L. Hardy
J Pickard

1876
Reeve —Wharton Hodgson
W H Verity
L Hardy
E Drew
J Pickard

1877
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J. Pickard
W H Verity
John Sanders
R. Bissett

1878
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
W H Verity
G Samwel
J N Howard
R Bissett

(Council resigned in January second vote in February)

1879
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
J Sanders
R. Bissett
E. Drew

1880
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
J Ranton
E Drew

(The St Marys Journal referred to one of these men as a walking whiskey barrel)

1881
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
W Bissett
E. Drew
J Pickard
W H Verity

1882
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
E Drew
W Fenwick

1883
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
W Fenwick
A G Dyer

1884
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
A G Dyer
D Johns

1885
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J. Pickard
W Bissett
A G Dyer
D Johns

1886
Reeve —J. A. Rollins
W G Bissett
D Johns
J Pickard
W Hawkins

1887
Reeve —J. A Rollins
W G Bissett
D Johns
J Pickard
T B Carling

1888
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
T B Carling
J Pickard
T H MacCallum

1889
Reeve —J. A. Rollins
J. Pickard
W Bissett
T B Carling
T H MacCallum

1890
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
D. A Rose
H Spackman
J Oke

1891
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
E Christie
T B. Carling
D A. Rose

1892
Reeve —W Bawden
E. Christie
H Spackman
D Ross
T B. Carling

1893
Reeve —J A Rollins
H Spackman
T B Carling
E. Christie
T B MacCallum

1894
Reeve —W Bawden
W G Bissett
T B. Carling
A Q Bohler
J W Taylor

1895
Reeve —T H MacCallum
T B. Carling
J W Taylor
W Treble
W Harding
(MacCallum tied with Bawden The Returning Officer voted for MacCallum)

1896
Reeve —W Bawden
C. Snell
W Treble
T B Carling
J Taylor

1897
Reeve —A Q Bohler
J W Taylor
C. B. Snell
J A. Rollins
J. Dauncey

1898
Reeve —T B Carling
W G Bissett
E. Christie
W Harding
J Evans

1899
Reeve —H Spackman
J. Evans
J Taylor
J Armstrong
J Mann

1900
Reeve —W G Bissett
W H Levitt
J Armstrong

J Muir
J Evans

1901
Reeve —W G Bissett
W H Levitt
J. Muir
J Evans
J Armstrong

1902
Reeve —W H Levitt
W Harding
J Muir
J. Wood
J Davis

1903
Reeve —T B Carling
J Cubbledick
J A. Gillespie
T Hawkins
J T Manning

(Manning was absent for three months and then replaced by J Creech)

1904
Reeve —W G Bissett
J W Taylor
J Muir
J Armstrong
J Wood

1905
Reeve —W G Bissett
J Armstrong
W H Levitt
J Muir
J Wood

1906
Reeve —A Q Bobier
A. E. Fuke
W J Heaman
E Treble
J Creech

1907
Reeve —A Q. Bobier
A. E. Fuke
W J Heaman
J J Knight
W Johns

1908
Reeve —A Q Bobier
J J Knight
W Johns
W J Heaman
A E Fuke

(Bobier defeated Bawden by 44 votes)

1909
Reeve —T H MacCallum
W Johns
W J Heaman
C. Luker
W J Carling

1910
Reeve —W Bawden
W J. Heaman
C Luker
W H Levitt
W A Balkwill

(Bawden died in October and was replaced by J Taylor. Luker moved from Exeter and was replaced by W W Walper)

1911
Reeve —J W Taylor
W H Levitt
W C Rivers
L. Day
W W Walper

1912
Reeve —W J Heaman
W H Levitt
W Rivers
J H Scott
A. Ford

1913
Reeve —W J. Heaman
J H Scott
J. Hind
J Doyle
T Harton

1914
Reeve —J W Taylor
J R Hind
T Harton
J Doyle
B. W F Beavers

1915
Reeve —J W Taylor

G Roulston
B W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton

1916
Reeve —J W Taylor
B W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton
G Roulston
(Beavers was Warden in 1916)

1917
Reeve —B W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton
L Day
C B Snell

1918
Reeve —B W F Beavers
L Day
J Elston
C B Snell
W H Penhale

1919
Reeve —B W F Beavers
L Day
J Elston
C. B. Snell
W H Penhale

1920
Reeve —B W F Beavers
W Ward
J Elston
J Davis
W H Penhale

1921
Reeve —B W F Beavers
J Davis
J Elston
W H Penhale
C B Snell

1922
Reeve —B W F Beavers
J Davis
P A Etherington
C F Hooper
D M Francis

1923
Same as above (B W F Beavers was Warden)

1924
Reeve —W D Sanders
J Davis
J M Southcott
C F Hooper
E Coultis

1925
Reeve —W D Sanders
E. Coultis
J Davis
C F Hooper
J Hawkins
(Sanders defeated C B. Snell by 15 votes)

1926
Reeve —W D Sanders
E. Coultis
J Davis
W Gillespie
J Hawkins

1927
Reeve —W D Sanders
E. Coultis
E. Davis
W Gillespie
J Hawkins

1928
Reeve —C B Snell
H Sterling
D.M. Francis
E.J Christie
H C Rivers
(Snell finally defeated W D Sanders after his fifth try)

1929
Reeve —C B Snell
H Sterling
E J Christie
D M Francis
H C Rivers
(Snell died in November and Francis was Acting Reeve. E J Christie also died)

1930
Reeve —B.M Francis
H Bierling
J Grieve
H. Rivers
D Rowcliffe

1931
Reeve —B M Francis
Others same as 1930

1932
Reeve —B M Francis
J H Grieve
D Rowcliffe
S. Ross
G Williams

(Francis defeated W D Sanders by 16 votes. Williams died in September and was replaced by H Bierling)

1933
Reeve —B.M Francis
H Bierling
J H Grieve
S. Ross
D Rowcliffe

(Francis defeated W D Sanders by 15 votes)

1934
Reeve —W D Sanders
H. Bierling
J H Grieve
D Rowcliffe
S Ross

(Sanders defeated Francis by 26 votes)

1935
Reeve —T Pryde
J W Hern
J. W Morley
G F Boulston
H C Rivers

1936
Reeve —T Pryde
H T Rowe
J.W Hern
E.M. Dignan
J W Morley

(Rowe resigned and was replaced by W E Middleton)

1937
Reeve —W D Sanders
E M Dignan
J. Wellington Hern
F A May
H O Southcott

(Dignan and Hern were the only two nominated for council at the first nomination meeting, so they were acclaimed as council. At a second nomination meeting on January 18, 4 were nominated with May and Southcott being elected)

1938
Reeve —W D. Sanders
E M Dignan
F A May
H O Southcott
B.W Tuckey

1939
Reeve —W D Sanders
J W Hern
E M Dignan
B W Tuckey
H O. Southcott

1940
Reeve —B.W Tuckey
E.M Dignan
H O Southcott
J W Hern
S.B. Taylor

(Tuckey defeated W D Sanders who wanted to be Warden.)

1941
Reeve —B.W Tuckey
E.M Dignan
J W Hern
H O Southcott
S B. Taylor

(All of the above were acclaimed)

1942
Reeve —B W Tuckey
E M Dignan
J W Hern
H.O Southcott
S B. Taylor

(The 1941 Council was returned to office under the Wartime Provisions Extension Act)

1943

Reeve —R.W Tuckey
A.J Sweitzer
H Bierling
E.M Dignan
J W Hern

(Tuckey defeated W.D Sanders and was appointed Warden of the County)

1944

Reeve —R.W Tuckey
H Bierling
E.M Dignan
J W Hern
A.J Sweitzer

1945

Same as 1944

1946

Reeve —R.W Tuckey
E.M Dignan
J W Hern
W C Allison
J Caldwell

1947

Reeve —R.W Tuckey
W J Allison
W.G Cochrane
A J Sweitzer
J Caldwell

(Caldwell had tied with R C Dinney This forced Clerk Pickard to cast the deciding vote Dinney indicated he wished the clerk to vote for Caldwell)

1948

Same as 1947

1949

Reeve —A J Sweitzer
E Lindenfield
W Hern
D.O Hughes
L Snider

(Qualification was completed with one minute to spare.)

1950

Reeve —A J Sweitzer
H L Snider
E Lindenfield
V Heywood
W Webster

THE FIRST TOWN COUNCIL

1951

Mayor —R Tuckey
Reeve —L Snider
Deputy Reeve—W G Cochrane
E. Beaver
R.C Dinney
W Mackenzie
W Webster
A Snelgrove
R. Campbell

(65% of the voters turned out at the polls Snider defeated Bierling by 32 votes Tuckey defeated Sweitzer by 205 votes Cochrane defeated V Heywood by 171 votes.)

1952

Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R.E Pooley
Deputy-Reeve—W Mackenzie
E. Beaver
A Snelgrove
R. Dinney
R Bailey
E. Brady
E. Witmer

(At this time former Mayor Tuckey said it was a "Good time to quit" it was a thankless job.)

1952

Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R E Pooley
Deputy-Reeve—W Mackenzie
R Bailey
E. Brady
R. Dinney
R D Jermyn
A. Snelgrove
E. Witmer

1954
Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R E. Pooley
Deputy Reeve—W Mackenzie
E. Brady
R Jermyn
A Snelgrove
R Bailey
R Dinney
E. Witmer

1955
Mayor —R E. Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C. Mawhinney
R D Jermyn
E.W Brady
R Taylor
R Dinney
A Snelgrove
R Bailey

(2 nomination meetings were needed to fill council and there was a threat of a third)

1956
Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C Mawhinney
W Musser
G Fisher
R Taylor
R Bailey
A. Pym
R Dinney

1957
Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy Reeve—C Mawhinney
W Musser
G Fisher
R Bailey
R Taylor
A Pym
M Greene

1958
Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C Mawhinney
C M Farrow
G Fisher
M Greene
R Taylor
R Bailey
W Musser

1959
Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C Mawhinney
E. Simmons
M Greene
G Fisher
R. Taylor
W Musser
G Rather

(Rather tied with Farrow but Rather won on the recount)

1960
Mayor —R E. Pooley
Reeve —C Mawhinney
Deputy-Reeve—G Fisher
J Weber
G Rather
R. Taylor
C Farrow
M Greene
W Musser

(Only 33% of the voters turned out at the polls)

1961
Mayor —R E. Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—G Fisher
J Dalbridge
R Taylor
R Bailey
C Farrow
W Musser
E Simmons

1962
Mayor —E Simmons
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—G Fisher
J Dalbridge
J L. Wooden
F Wright
C. Farrow
R Taylor
R. Bailey

(Mackenzie had failed in his bid for Wardenship in 1958 by losing to Morrissey on the 4th ballot. Mackenzie died in January 1962 and Fisher resigned as Deputy Reeve and was appointed Reeve. Farrow and Bailey both resigned as Councillors and allowed their names to stand for Deputy-Reeve. Farrow was elected as Deputy-Reeve and Bailey was elected as Councillor again. W. Musser was elected to fill Farrow's post as Councillor)

1963 1964

Mayor —E. Simmons
Reeve —G. Fisher
Deputy-Reeve—W. Musser
J. Delbridge
J.L. Wooden
F. Wright
R. Taylor
N. Ferguson
R. Bailey

(This was the beginning of the two year terms. In June Musser resigned and Bailey was elected Deputy Reeve. C. E. Boyle filled the vacant Council seat)

1965 1966

Mayor —J. Delbridge
Reeve —C.E. Boyle
Deputy-Reeve—R. Bailey
C.V. Barrett
M. Cudmore
R. Taylor
J.L. Wooden
F. Wright
F. Gandon

(Gandon replaced R. Bailey upon Bailey's death and D. MacGregor took Gandon's place)

1967 1968

Mayor —J. Delbridge
Reeve —C.E. Boyle
Deputy Reeve—M. Cudmore
D. MacGregor
J. Newby
R. Taylor
G. Vriese
J.L. Wooden
F. Wright

1969 1970

Mayor —J. Delbridge
Reeve —C.E. Boyle
Deputy Reeve—M. Cudmore
R. Dobson
(Mrs.) H. Jermyn
D. MacGregor
T. MacMillan
R. Taylor
G. Vriese

(G. Vriese died in office. Mrs. Jermyn was the first and only woman ever to sit on Council).

1971 1972

Mayor —J. Delbridge
Reeve —C.E. Boyle
Deputy Reeve—D. MacGregor
M. Cudmore
Mrs. H. Jermyn
T. MacMillan
K. Ottewell
B. Shaw
R. Taylor

1973 1974

Mayor —J. H. W. Delbridge
Reeve —C. E. Boyle
Deputy-Reeve— Mrs. H. Jermyn
B. Shaw
F. Wright
B. Hoogenboom
T. MacMillan
R. Simpson
H. Patterson

It is not possible to comment on all of the men who served. Indeed, it is doubtful if comments should be made at all, but perhaps a few words may be said about some of the men. The first

Reeve, Isaac Carling, has been mentioned previously. Lancelot Hardy served as Reeve for nine years. He was born in Ireland in 1835 and came with his parents to London in 1842. He was a bridge builder by trade and by profession an Anglican and Conservative. Hardy died in 1922 at the age of 87. In 1923 Mrs. Hardy presented a large framed photograph of Hardy to Council. This photograph still hangs in the Council chambers. J. A. Rollins was Reeve for 7 years and mention was made of Rollins in a previous chapter. One amusing incident concerning Rollins involved his giving of gifts at Christmas one year he was seeking election. Someone changed the name on the tags to his opponent. Alexander Queen Bobier made a number of innovations. He set up the first Committees of Council, one responsible for fire, water and light, one for roads and bridges, and a cemetery committee. Bobier also established regular meeting nights, the second and fourth Mondays of the month. He was the first to invite a clergyman to open the first meeting of the year.

B. W. F. Beavers is remembered as one of the most able Reeves. He had been a teacher but entered the business field operating a number of stores in Exeter. The Times described him in 1919 as a "young, energetic, capable leader." He served as Warden of the county in 1918.

Only two heads of Council advanced politically to the Provincial Legislature. One was, of course, Carling and the other was Thomas Pryde. Others such as Tuckey and Cochrane sought higher office unsuccessfully.

W. D. Sanders served 8 years as Reeve but he contested virtually every election in the 1920's and 1930's. He became an ever present figure at nomination meetings. Sanders served as a Justice of the Peace from 1907 to 1952. He died in 1952 at the age of 89.

A. J. Sweitzer "must be recognized as one of the hardest working Reeves the village ever had. His energy and resourcefulness will not soon be forgotten," said the Times. Sweitzer was the last Reeve to head the Council.

Benson W. Tuckey, the first Mayor, holds the record as the longest serving Head. He was Reeve for 9 years from 1940 to 1948 and Mayor in 1951. Tuckey, of course, is well known for his business enterprise and political activities as Liberal candidate in two elections. Tuckey was born in Hyde Park and moved to the family farm north of Exeter. In 1929 he started the Tuckey Transport Company at the age of 22 with one truck. He expanded the business over the years and in 1971 he sold what can only be described as a million dollar business. Tuckey served as Warden of the county in 1943. He has served on various boards over the years and must be recognized as one of Exeter's leading citizens.

W. G. Cochrane served as Exeter's second mayor. A lawyer who is now County Crown Attorney. Cochrane in 1953 presented the city of Exeter, England with a silver cigar box and in return he received a BBC recording of the presentation of a gavel to the town of Exeter in December 1951. This gavel, made from black oak from an old bridge in Exeter, England was presented to a representative of Ontario at Ontario House in 1951. This presentation was made by Exeter, England to Exeter, Ontario to recognize the latter's becoming a town. Tom Pryde later in the month presented the gavel to Mayor Tuckey.

B. E. Pooley was mayor for 7 years and proved to be an able but controversial mayor. Mayor Pooley provided vigorous leadership and did not hesitate to criticize the people of Exeter for apathy and lack of interest in municipal affairs. Mayor Pooley was involved with controversies over the hospital, schools, the dump and the tanning factory.

Eldred Simmons served as Exeter's youngest head of Council becoming Mayor at the age of 40. He was succeeded by the present Mayor J. H. Delbridge, who in many ways typifies South Huron. Descended from Devon stock, (we mentioned the first Delbridge settler in chapter one) and an Usborne farmer, Mayor Delbridge has served the community well.

The longest terms on Council have been served by James Pickard — 16 years, W. G. Bissett — 18 years and Ross Taylor — 18 years. Taylor's 18 years were continuous whereas Bissett's were not.

Over the years people have tended to remember amusing incidents or unflattering performances by Council. For example in 1954 one councillor had been napping but suddenly came to life when a discussion on increasing councillors' salaries occurred. On the other hand, the 1930 council gave their salary to hold a children's Christmas party and in the early 1960's Mayor Simmons turned his salary back to the town and urged councillors to do the same. Traditionally the reeve entertained council from time to time, for example in 1919 the reeve entertained council at an "oyster feed" in A. W. Stetham's restaurant. One retiring councillor entertained the other members of council, the clerk and assessor in a room recently added to his home. The next day this councillor received a new assessment notice!

In 1934 a stormy session of council concerning relief saw the reeve call in the constable to eject a member of council from chambers. The reeve relented, however, and permitted the member to stay. This is the only time things got that violent although Reeve C. E. Boyle once baited a fellow member of council to the point where that councillor hurled, with deadly accuracy, a heavy book at the Reeve. In September, 1960 there was an argumentative meeting over which Mayor Pooley was very disturbed. But this has gone on for years. In 1888 councillors got under each others' skin as they did in 19[illegible] and will in 1978. Councillor McCallum was fond of "tantalizing Councillor Bissett" and Councillors Carling and Bissett "frequently had loud words" and Councillor Carling spoke "his mind in spite of everyone". The Advocate reported that Reeve Rollins would smile "to see the members getting riled up and calling each other nice names".

On one occasion, in 1947, "during the discussions there was some twitting and prodding of the council" by persons waiting upon council. This got "under Reeve Tuckey's skin" and he expressed his opinions in no uncertain terms.

Councils over the years have been responsible for providing the municipal services. Some of these services such as planning, recreation services, sanitary sewers and zoning are relatively recent, but the basic problems faced by councils over the years have remained the same. These are things like drainage, streets, roads, sidewalks, utilities, acquisition of industry, fire and police protection, relief, and so on.

The next few pages will attempt to review some aspects of municipal work. There is so much detail and so many records in a municipality that a book such as this can only briefly consider a few of these aspects.

> "Exeter can boast of having as fine a lot of firemen as any place its size in Canada and in fact many larger towns have not got as good a lot of men. At the firemen's demonstration held in Brantford on Friday last they won additional laurels by carrying off the first prize in the international hose reel race. The distance run was five hundred yards and they had to lay or unwind 300 feet of hose and make connection with the hydrant. Their time was 6 or 7 seconds less than that made by the other competitors. The prize is a Silver Water Tilter and two goblets, valued at $100."
>
> (Exeter Times, June 11, 1885)

The fire departments of small towns played more prominent roles in the community in those days than they do now. Uniforms, tanks, fire company names, parades and various other aspects of the fire fighting apparatus gave some color to the village. The prize that was won in Brantford was displayed on Friday, July 18, 1885 in a torch light parade led by the band and chief Robert Pickard. Unfortunately, and inexplicably, the Water Tilter and Goblets were lost in a fire at the Goderich Airport some years ago. They were deposited in the Library but were removed somehow after the war.

There is no information about fires or fire companies in the years before Exeter was incorporated as a village. It is known that in 1870 Exeter acquired from London the old "Rescue" fire engine for $170. No information is available regarding this, other than the fact that it was acquired. Two fire companies existed in Exeter for several decades. These companies existed in the 1870's but, again, it is not clear when the companies were formed. Both companies were well established in 1875. The Rescue Fire Company No. 1 was located in the north end of Exeter in a building owned by Digory Braund immediately west of his blacksmith shop. The Rescue Company wore red uniforms with red fire caps and big black belts. The Defiance Fire Company No. 2 had a larger engine and the men wore royal purple jackets, red fire hats, and big black belts. In 1875 the Rescue Company had Captain Sanders at the head and the Defiance Company had Captain McGlaghlin.

Some of the other members of the Defiance Company in 1875 were J. W. Lambrooke, S. Oke, A. Sheere, D. Johns, W. Buckingham, George Heyman, C. Brimacombe, J. Evans, B. Sheddock, M. Eacrett, C. Harton, T. A. McConnell, C. Bissett, W. Kerslake, W. Carling, A. McDonald, E. Shute, Silas Sweet, W. Treble, Richard Luxton, I. Handford. In 1876 William Treble became Captain of the Defiance Company, Joseph Orr was First Lieutenant and David Johns was Second Lieutenant. William Southcott was leading foreman. George Maree was chief engineer.

The fire companies were elaborately organized with various rules and regulations. From time to time the minutes of the Defiance Company reveal dismissals, admissions and fines, according to the by laws of the company. For example, in September 1876 W. J. Carling was expelled from the Defiance Company on a motion of Richard Luxton and William Buckingham. A few weeks later it was decided that "J. B. Scram is a fit and proper person to become a member of Defiance Fire Company No. 2". Another entry reveals how Seth Balsdon was fined 25¢ in December, 1876 for "neglecting to help to take the engine home on the night of the last fire".

The officers of the Defiance Company for three selected years are given below to illustrate the rank structure of the company.

1877

Captain — William Treble
First Lieutenant — Joseph Orr
Second Lieutenant — James Dew
Secretary Treasurer — George Willis
Foreman of the Leading Hose — Isaac Handford
Assistant Foreman of the leading Hose — J. Handford
Leading Hosemen — J. Crocker, R. Luxton
Suction Hosemen — W. Southcott, W. Kerslake, A. McDonald, W. Buckingham, J. B. Lambrooke
Others — Charles Eacrett, E. Gill, Richard Bissett

1882

Captain — W. Treble
First Lieutenant — E. Howard
Second Lieutenant — T. Weekes
First Branchman — J. Handford
Second Branchman — F. Howard
Secretary Treasurer — D. Spicer
Foreman of the Leading Hose — T. Crocker
Assistant Foreman of the Leading Hose — G. Hill
Leading Hosemen — W. Stewart, W. Sutton, P. Johns, D. Davis, W. Westcott
Suction Hosemen — J. Cudmore, W. Cann, W. Creech

1900

Captain — Samuel Sweet
First Lieutenant — Silas Handford
Second Lieutenant — William Creech
Secretary Treasurer — George E. Anderson
First Branchman — Eli Snell
Second Branchman — John Rendel
Third Branchman — Samuel Poplestone
Fourth Branchman — A. Bagshaw
Foreman of the Hose — James Taylor
Assistant Foreman of the Hose — G. E. Anderson
Suction Hoseman — Albert Ford

As we mentioned above, then, there were two fire companies in Exeter. The Defiance Company was probably formed in 1873 when Exeter was incorporated and the Rescue Company may have been formed in the years before incorporation. Apparently the first fire hall was located south-west of the Exeter United Church. The year of its erection is unknown. It may have been 1874 since the Rescue engine was acquired then. A lock-up or jail was evidently located in this building also. What Exeter used for fire fighting before the purchase of the Rescue engine is also unknown, although the bucket and ladder system was probably the technique used to fight early fires.

The first bell in Exeter was found in this James Street fire hall and was rung in the early years by Constable Gill at 6 a.m., 7 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. When the town hall was built the old fire hall was sold to Dr. Browning. It was also used for a time by the Salvation Army as a hall.

The North End fire hall was built shortly after incorporation, possibly in 1875. The second fire engine, the Defiance, was acquired. It was considered necessary to have two fire stations and engines because the village was rather spread out. The North End hall was erected on the Ramsay property and Jim Ramsay rang the hall there. The site of this North End hall was later the site of Moses Amy's house. The hall was later moved to Digory Braund's property where it remained until 1933 when it was demolished.

The members of the fire companies took great pride in their appearance, in their skill, and in the efficient working of the pump. In order to acquire funds for their uniforms and equipment, the companies held concerts and engaged in other forms of fund raising. People also made donations to the company. For example, in 1877 Eldred Drew gave $30.00 to the companies. Grateful citizens often made donations, for example, an advertisement in the 1870's read "the Exeter Fire Companies return thanks to John White and Sons for their liberal donations." Firemen had saved the Times office. Competitions among fire companies from various towns often resulted in money prizes which added to the company's income. Council supported the companies to the extent that the municipality bought the engines and built the stations and provided so much money per man. For 1873 to 1880 the amount seems to have been $2.00. In 1880 the firemen decided to ask for $5.00 per man and they threatened to resign if they did not get the increase. From time to time the firemen would ask council for some financial help in purchasing new uniforms or hats or belts. This was done in 1878 when both companies got new uniforms and paraded through the village on July 1 showing off their fire fighting finery.

The men practised regularly and an item in the Times of April 5, 1877 reads:

> No. 2 Company engaged in practice with their engine "Defiance" on Monday evening last. The water was taken from the tank at the corner of Main and Huron Streets. The engine was in good working order and threw the water considerably higher than the roof of the Mansion House."

Fires were always a threat and the frequent practice kept the men in good shape to fight the fires. Of course, the regular meetings and practices were social activities as well. The men, however, did have to be in good shape. The two fire engines were hand pumpers and were pulled to fires by the firemen. The first two men to arrive at the engine house took the tongue until the Lieutenants arrived and the others took the drag ropes. Sometimes a horse was used because in October 1877 the Times noted that Engine No. 2 rushed to a fire with "a splendid horse belonging to James Pickard" providing the locomotion for the engine. But most of the time the men pulled the engine to the fire and strenuously worked the pump to throw the water when they reached the fire. The water came from wells or from strategically located tanks which were constructed under the streets at various corners.

There were a number of fires in 1875 and 1876. So many in fact

that the Times suspected an "incendiary". Carling's store nearly burned in 1875 but the fire was discovered in time by Isaac Carling. The Times hoped that "steps will be taken by Council at its next meeting to preserve the village from a recurrence of what might have been a holocaust". On the night of June 17, 1875 Kirkpatrick's Woollen Mill burned down. The Times felt that it was "probably caused by one of the many strangers who are now prowling around".

In February, 1876 the Times reported as follows:

> "The fiery fiend seems to have taken its lodging here for the present. On Tuesday night about nine o'clock Welsh's Carriage Shop was discovered to be on fire. ... A rush was made for the "Defiance" which again did splendid and noble work. It arrived however too late to save the building but just in time to save the Crocker livery stable. ... Messrs. Dyer, Spicer, and Handford at the hose, worked like heroes. ...
>
> The Rescue must not be overlooked. She and her brave brigade came from Exeter North to the assistance of the "Defiance" and both men and engine deserve high encomiums of praise".

The stable of the Union Hotel also burned in 1876 but on the Saturday night in question the "Defiance" again was "speedily on the ground" and through George Willis' foresight in locating a well to feed the engine the hotel itself was saved. The cry of fire in the village and the sounding of the bell was heard several other times in 1876. Mr. Eacrett's house nearly burned when a mattress caught fire from the adjacent stove pipe. John Willis' barn burned in a spectacular fire fanned by a strong east wind. The house was saved by the "strenuous exertions of the willing and faithful" firemen. The "Rescue" came down from the North End but the pump failed. It was discovered that a large stone had been driven into the nozzle "by someone". The Times suspected "foul play".

Fortunately none of these fires were disastrous. Indeed, Exeter has been extremely fortunate over the years in that few fires of disastrous proportions have occurred. Many small towns have suffered the loss of the Main Street or a major industry but Exeter's fires have been kept under control before spreading. Industries have burned, such as Dyer and Howard's mill worth $7000, which burned in 1901, the woollen mill and the flax mill, but these fires did not affect the whole town. On February 15, 1879 MacNabb's Bending Factory burned. It had burned two years before but MacNabb had rebuilt. In April, 1878 he had become insolvent. MacNabb sold it and various financial arrangements were made which, said the Times, "the people generally could not understand". According to the Times, two attempts were made to burn the factory before the successful fire occurred on February 15, 1879. The Times sarcastically reported that one of the supposed owners, a Mr. Keene, when awakened and told that his factory was on fire "got up — in about an hour." It was further reported that Mr. Keena and his men worked "vigorously" to save a pile of spoke timber. Each man carried one of those "heavy pieces of timber (about two feet long and two inches in diameter) ... laid it gently on the ground and returned slowly for another." A hearing was held to investigate the fire. Dr. Hyndman presided over the 17 man jury in an attempt to find out "who done it." T. McCallum testified that he had told several people that he "feared they meant to burn it as (he) could see no way they were going to make money out of it otherwise." The long report of the hearing indicated that it had certainly been burned by someone who hoped to gain from the insurance. This was not the first nor the last such fire in Exeter.

The flax mill fire occurred on May 9, 1921. It started about noon and "before anything could be done the building was a mass of flames." The fire could have been very widespread since a "brisk breeze" was blowing sparks for long distances. A dozen other buildings caught fire but the firemen prevented the loss of three structures. The loss was valued at $10,000. In 1925 a large frame storage building belonging to the flax mill burned with 2000 bushels of flax, 30 tons of upholstery and 26 loads of unscutched flax straw plus wagons and equipment.

Probably the most serious fire in Exeter occurred on June 17, 1920 when "four frame barns in the business section were destroyed by fire." The fire "seriously threatened the main business portion of the town. The fire started in a stable belonging to W. J. Statham at the rear of his store. It rapidly spread to several other buildings. It was only by the strenuous efforts of the firemen, assisted by bucket brigades" that kept the loss to only four barns. The other barns were those owned by C. T. Brooks, express agent, F. Wood, butcher, and E. Willis. [illegible] all over the Main Street area, including the frame stable of J. G. Jones, Southcott's warehouse, Heaman's warehouse, and others were ignited by sparks but the fires were quickly put out. Mr. Statham's and Mr. Makins' ice houses had the roofs burned. This fire, which could have destroyed much of the Main Street was started by two boys who were in Statham's barn looking for two young pups. The boys lit a match which ignited some straw and the flames spread quickly.

As far as is known only one person ever died in a fire in Exeter. That tragedy occurred in April, 1937 when Mrs. A. J. Little was burned in a fire in Exeter North. Her three small grandchildren and her two sons escaped.

In December, 1899 there was a $7,000 fire in the Exeter Electric Light and Power Company plant. Below is a description of this fire.

"At an early hour on Sunday morning, presumably three o'clock, fire broke out in the Electric Power House owned by Tremaine and Snell, and before noticed, the entire building was almost gutted . . . the construction of the building confined the force of the flames within the walls and thus prevented the Metropolitan Hotel and J. P. Ross' store across the street from igniting. The intense heat, however, cracked J. P. Ross' fine plate glass fronts as well as a large number of windows in the hotel . . . About nine o'clock the roof came in and the heavy walls fell, leaving the large building an almost total wreck . . . The origin of the fire is a mystery . . . We learn that the Company will rebuild at once, and in order that the town may not experience any prolonged inconvenience from loss of the lights, it is proposed to place dynamos in some factories and connect the various circuits at once."

In 1901, Digory Braund's blacksmith shop burned; in 1906 A. J. Rollins' grain warehouse burned when it was ignited by a spark from a locomotive.

One of the most tragic fires in the area occurred outside Exeter at Sodom in 1923 when Silas Stanlake's house burned. In this fire, six persons died. This fire is described below in the words of the Advocate report.

"A most disastrous fire occurred at the home of Silas Stanlake three miles west of Exeter on Friday night, about 11:30 o'clock, when in some manner his home caught on fire after the family had retired, and his wife, Maud Maria Porter, aged 38, his brother Albert Stanlake, aged 46 and four of his five children, Clarence Audrey, aged 12, Charlie, aged 9, Wilfred, aged 4, and Arthur Gilbert, a babe of three weeks, were either suffocated or burned to death . . . Mr. Stanlake went downstairs and was horrified to find the kitchen in flames. He immediately called to the family to get up and come downstairs while he attempted to put out the fire by getting a fire extinguisher which hung in the kitchen. Immediately however the main portion of the house burst into flames and it was impossible for Mr. Stanlake to get up the stairs to rescue those in the upper storey . . . The remains were recovered and these were taken to the funeral parlors of Mr. M. E. Gardiner, Exeter from which place the funeral took place on Sunday afternoon to the Exeter cemetery. The service was conducted by Rev. A. A. Trumper and a great many people gathered in the opera house to pay their last respects to the deceased. The cause of the fire still remains a mystery and probably always will."

A fire bug or an "incendiary" was at work in Exeter in May, 1895. J. P. Ross' store next to the Metropolitan Hotel was burned.

"The fire was of incendiary origin and had been started in five different places by some one familiar with the premises. As all the outside doors were locked as left by Mr. Ross, an investigation revealed the means of access to the building by the firebug. A trap door leading to the coal cellar under the storehouse was opened . . . The fire was carefully kindled in two places in the business office, and under one of the counters and in the storehouse several barrels upon which had

> been piled a bunch of brooms, saturated with turpentine, were also fired . . . The attempt to burn the premises was a bold one . . . The motive for the deed is a mystery, as Mr. Ross knows of no enemy holding sufficient malice to commit such a daring deed."

Also in 1895 fire destroyed the Main Street Methodist Church. The description of the fire appeared in the March 28, 1895 issue of the Times. This fire was thought to have been set by a firebug as well:

> "Sunday morning about quarter to four o'clock the citizens were aroused from their peaceful slumbers by the ringing of the fire alarm. The fire had gained such headway before being discovered by the neighbours that it required no speculation on the part of any to locate the scene. The bright reflection from the already enveloped building woke the neighbours, and by the time the alarm was sounded the roof had gone in and the flames were ascending high into the tower. The fire companies were soon on hand, but all attention was directed to the saving of the sheds and adjacent buildings, which, during the progress of the fire, ignited several times, and it was with difficulty and with great labour that the residences of Capt. Kemp and Will Folland on the next street were saved from the destructing element. Large cinders were carried for half a mile. It is presumed that the fire was of incendiary origin, no light or fire having been used in the church since the preceding Friday, but to conceive a motive for the act is an impossibility since the church was a [illegible] [illegible] The building was burned to the ground, not a vestige of wood used in its construction being left, and even the heavy walls crumbled and fell."

In August of 1894 "swamp fires were causing uneasiness in Exeter having reached the bush, just west of the station."[41] Fortunately these fires did not reach the village but they did burn out large areas of the swamp.

In recent years serious fires have been kept to a minimum in Exeter. Helge Jensen's woodworking plant burned in 1948, the Huron Lumber Company burned in 1954, and the Exeter Cooperative burned, to name a few. Probably the worst fire in recent decades was the New Years' Eve fire at the Exeter Produce Plant.

Over the years, then, Exeter has been rather more fortunate than many other Ontario towns and villages as far as fires are concerned. While there have been serious blazes which destroyed individual buildings no fire has swept through a section of the town. Many Ontario centres have had fires which destroyed whole sections of the community.

The fire-fighting apparatus which the town originally had has been mentioned. That is, the Rescue and the Defiance engines. In 1891, a hook and ladder vehicle was added. About the turn of the century a steam fire engine was purchased, the old Rescue pumper was traded in on this vehicle. The "steamer" had an upright boiler type of engine which burned wood. This apparatus could throw water to the top of the James Street Church steeple. The steam pumper obviated the necessity of the exhausting hand pumping but it was still propelled down the village streets by man power although the occasional horse was forced into service.

In 1927 a motor driven engine was purchased from London and in 1944 a new truck was purchased. There was only one fire station in Exeter by that time. In recent years a fire agreement with the adjacent townships has resulted in the acquisition of more modern fire fighting apparatus.

Water supply for fire fighting came from private wells or from tanks which were located on most Main Street corners and on several back street corners. For example, a large tank was built at the corner of Andrew and Victoria Streets to provide protection for the school. This tank was installed in 1902 by Peter Bowden and measured 12' x 24' x 10'. It cost $273. Evidently in 1904 this tank was enlarged to 31½' in length and had a well 3' x 3' x 2' at one end.

In 1895 Council was asked to construct a tank at the Metropolitan Hotel corner. Since "the salt water used by the firemen is most destructive to everything it touches". It is not clear what the source of this salt water was that the firemen used at this corner.

Water mains began to appear about 1901 and in 1909 the stand pipe was constructed and the dam was rebuilt. Gradually a network of water mains using water from the river provided improved fire protection to the village.

The Rescue Fire Company No. 1 1896

Firemen were called at first by bells on the old fire hall and on the north end fire hall. In 1884 Council bought a new bell from a firm in Troy, New York for $300. It weighed 1500 pounds and "Council was at a loss" to know what to do with it or where to place it since it was too heavy for either fire hall.

After the new town hall was built in 1887 the bell erected in the tower of this building called the firemen to their posts.

In 1902 a steam whistle was placed on the grist mill across from the town hall. In 1903 Council experimented with the steam whistle using it instead of the bell for the daily time signals at 6, 7, 12, 1 and 6 o'clock but the Times disapproved saying it "had the effect of frightening horses." Fortunately the use of the cacophonous whistle was discontinued and the use of the bell returned. In 1944 the siren was placed in the Town Hall.

In so far as organization goes the old fire companies were disbanded by Council and a new fire department organized under Chief William Treble. The old companies continued to operate, however, much as before. In the 1890's James Weekes was appointed Chief; he remained Chief for forty years until the 1930's, he was on the fire department for over fifty years. A number of others served on the fire department for many years as well. Ed Treble served fifty years until 1946. Richard Davis retired in 1946 after forty-eight years. Others with long service were Herb Ford, Jack Norry, Sid Sanders, M. Quance, Walter Cunningham, Louis Day, Algee Sanders, Irwin Ford, Frank Creech, and Ernest Wells.

The present volunteer Fire Brigade is still called Defiance Company No. 2.

Police protection has always been a municipal responsibility since the passage of the Baldwin Act. In Exeter the first police service was provided by an officer who was designated as Constable and Street Commissioner. Probably the first man appointed to this office was John Gill. Gill had come from Cornwall, England to Canada in 1856 settling first in Whitby and coming to Exeter about 1858. Gill may have been appointed Constable before Exeter was incorporated but it is likely that he was appointed in 1873 by the Village Council. Gill remained on the job throughout the 1870's and 1880's. He received a salary of $50.00 a year as bailiff and constable. Alfred A. Bowey was another early Constable in Exeter. James Creech served as Chief Constable and Street Commissioner from the early 1880's until 1902. Creech's duties included those in the following list:

1) Patrol streets until midnight
2) Clean the town hall
3) Perform duties of sanitary inspector
4) Enforce the village by-laws
5) Ring the town bell at 6 a.m., 7 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m., 6 p.m., 7 p.m., and 9 p.m. curfew if required by Council
6) Collect the Statute Labor commutations.
7) Light the street lamps.

Creech had to post a bond and in 1857 he received a salary of $325.00 for the year. In 1887 Constable Creech dealt with the usual police matters. The safe in the Verity Plow Works was blown. The Station House was robbed and horses were stolen from the Commercial Hotel livery stable. Burglaries occurred from time to time and in one week three stores were burglarized in 189. Other robberies included such things as cow thefts, orchard thefts, shoplifting and commonly timber thefts from Canada Company lands. An example of this last item occurred in 1876 when John Ironsides a Company agent brought timber thieves before Justice of the Peace George Willis. Constable Creech also had to deal with drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking and rowdyism. He was called upon by the Times to do something about "loafers" on the streets making rude remarks to ladies. "Gyps" passed through town from time to time and took the village folk for a few dollars. The Constable also had to control dogs, cows and all manner of other animals on the loose. Noise in the streets drew complaints. Teams with improper bells on the sleighs and fast driving on the streets drew the Times criticism. Why people drove at twice the legal limit of 7 mph and the Constable was laughed at. "Disgraceful! This furious driving on Main Street should be put an end to!" said the Times. In 1878 the Times had observed that some Usborne men had been brought before Squire Gidley the Justice of the Peace, to answer for their fast driving and "unseemly and riotous conduct". "A few more offenders should be seriously dealt with" commented the Times.

Boys were a constant problem for Constable Creech. Indeed they were a constant problem for his predecessors and have been a continuous problem for his successors. They jumped on sleighs and wagons, they stole, they shot peas, they played in the streets. Indeed in 1884 Council passed a by-law prohibiting the playing of lacrosse, kicking football, throwing snowballs or any other missile on village streets. The Times' headline read "BEWARE BOYS". There were a number of letters in the Advocate concerning "the boys". The theme of half of the letters was "what are we going to do with our boys?" And the half of the correspondence dealt with the behaviour of the "boys" which concerned the older generation. "Improper conduct, improper language, cigarette smoking, tobacco chewing and drinking" were some of the activities which were being indulged in by the boys and which drew the wrath of the older folk. People also commented on the boys' laziness, destructiveness and lounging around the streets. In other words the older generation criticized the boys for doing the same things that every generation of boys indulges in and which somehow become more evil when you pass a certain age.

Some of the boys replied. Parts of two letters are quoted below.

> "I am one of those boys who have been so swiftly sliding down the road that leads to the total destruction of body, mind and soul. To judge from the words of these writers we have been guilty of all the crimes in the calendar ... Did you ever hear two old gentlemen talk about their doings in their younger days? ... They tell stories of depredations, destruction of property, satisfying of lusts etc., for which a boy now would spend some nights in the "cooler" or be made pay a fine. Yet they dare talk about the boys of today being altogether foul and sinful ... What must the world outside of our village think of our boys and girls? People will think of us as they did of the Donnellys some years ago ... "Do not go near Exeter lest thy purity be contaminated by its foul atmosphere and thy good name blasted forever" ... I know that the boys are not so bad as pictured. Wherein are we so bad? It seems to be more particularly in the smoking of cigarettes and the drinking of liquor. By whom are these articles sold? Are there any boys selling them? Is there no law against it? ... If the boys could not get cigarettes or liquor they would not desire them. And is not the seller a man, not a boy?

Another letter read:

> "I am one of the bad boys of Exeter of whom so many unkind and hard things have been written of late ... Are Exeter girls and boys worse than the girls and boys of other towns? ... How is it that we are permitted to remain at large? ... In the meantime, Mr Editor, will you kindly point out a few of the grey-haired saints of the village not the church goers but the saints. If peradventure there be one, who is he that we may emulate his example? We hear the old people swearing, lying and backbiting their neighbours, we see them fighting and struggling one with the other to the end that one may succeed and the other fail — on the David Harum principles of "Do unto the other fellow what he would do to you if he got a chance, and see that you get in the first crack" ... How about the old rascals in and out of our churches who justify the ballot box stuffers, the ballot switchers, and would our girls and boys burn the West Elgin ballots and swear that they knew nothing about the burning? No Sir, we would not, yet we see our parents, preachers and all upholding such conduct and winking at all sorts of political hypocrisy ... The open hearted, free, generous, rollicking girls and boys of Exeter refuse to be slandered by any bumptious newspaper man too — and slandered I maintain we have been most shamefully."

Various solutions were presented by some of the village philosophers to the problem of what to do with the boys. Selections from some of these solutions are offered below, for the edification of the present generation of boys:

> Physical culture as well as general morals should take a decided place in our school curriculum. The suggestion that a shed be erected on the school grounds, is an excellent one and I hope that the trustees

> will carry it out. It would save the school, give room for drilling boys and girls, serve as a play room in wet, hot or stormy weather, be used for general picnics and built so that both compartments could be thrown into one, serve as a splendid hall for summer meetings of a public character . . . What about the most dangerous period of a boy's life from sixteen to twenty-one years? The ordinary village or town life, does not present sufficient or harmless allurement to prevent boys and even girls from running after harmful ones. There are prayer meetings, league meetings, endeavor meetings, class meetings, special meetings, Bible meetings, etc., etc., almost every night of the week. But the average boy of today does not take such a deep and absorbing interest in those as to compel his attendance . . . It appears to us that had the boys a common meeting ground such as a large room . . . It would simply be a boys' club room . . . Let the boys practically run their own show on certain lines. Appoint weekly one of themselves, as Censor to see the rules carried out. No gambling, no filthy, foul or objectionable language, reasonable hours and proper order. One night a week to be devoted to a debate by the boys themselves . . .

Another letter writes:

> "I agree . . . spending your evenings in self-culture, such as debating on the questions of the day. Music also is very essential to a young man's education. You have your field games in summer for physical exercise and amusement, your skating rink for the same purpose in this line and there are the churches with all their elevating and refining influences. Now I think you want something more substantial than another playhouse. I think the parents of Exeter would rather contribute five hundred dollars each to the building of a large factory than five dollars to another place of amusement, as the former would give openings for bookkeepers, typewriters, superintendents, engineers, business managers, shipping clerks, travelling salesmen and an army of employees, and Exeter could man every position with their own boys."
>
> "It is a common thing to notice on our streets small boys of different ages indulging in the use of tobacco some chewing, some smoking cigarettes, some cigars and others a pipe. This certainly should not be and it would seem as though those dealing in the weed have little or no knowledge of the law regarding its sale to minors" (It was illegal to dispense tobacco in any form to a person under eighteen years of age)

So the boys were, indeed, a problem for the constables. Constable Gill in 1878 tried to stop the boys from insulting the ladies and "horsing" around on the Commons on Sunday afternoon. One fall night during these same years "A bovine of the feminine gender with a dozen or so old tins attached to her caudal appendage, made Sunday night hideous by the clattering." The boys were at it again! Even the very young lads were not above the occasional burglary as the following item from an issue of the 1875 Times illustrates:

"On Tuesday night last, at a late hour, as Mr. T. Carling was retur-

> ing home from a skating party he saw two lads aged about nine and eleven, whose names we suppress for the parents sake working with a shovel and trying to gain an entrance into his father's store by the cellar window"

In 1890, the Advocate suggested that "the destructiveness of the youths of Exeter is almost beyond belief" The boys broke windows in vacant houses they threw stones at the chancel window of the English Church they set fire to Mrs Murdock's green house and cut down the lamp posts on Main Street "If the youths realize any amusement in such work the sooner they are given a few months in jail the better" said the Advocate

Boys were not the only source of trouble however Young and not so young men caused a good deal of trouble rather often Exeter was considered to be a very rowdy town from time to time and in 1899 the following item appeared in the Times It illustrates the problem clearly

> "The disgraceful scene on Main Street Tuesday night, lasting for several hours, is another illustration if any were needed of the necessity of curbing the disposition and language of men who make our streets a place for the use of vile language and conduct unbecoming any respectable class of men That the air of a public highway should reek with bad language is evil enough and it is time that steps were taken to prevent a repetition of the occurrence Free speech and the right of every man to express himself publicly and privately is clearly limited by the proprieties of social intercourse and the amenities of public life, that such blasphemy as was resorted to Tuesday night is entirely out of the question We withhold names this time, but if the like occurs again we certainly shall expose the guilty parties

Keeping an eye on "visitors" to the village was another job that had to be looked after by the constable of the town In January 1878 the Times commented "There are several hard looking cases in town Lock up carefully when you retire, lest some of these long fingered gentry should attempt an entrance" In July 1884 the following item appeared in the Times It, too, refers to visitors to the town and the item is quoted in its entirety because it provides some of the color of village life in the 1880's

> A Queer Lot of Vagrants"
>
> 'On Friday afternoon last, the loungers about town were provided with a new sensation by the appearance on the streets of decidedly the oddest company which ever graced them The party comprised two men two women and half a dozen or so of children The men led each a huge brown bear two lads of fifteen or so, each leading a smaller bear and four monkeys trotted after the procession The bears were mangy and ill-groomed, the men were wild-looking ragged and dirty and as the men chanted a monotonous ballad in some unknown jargon while the muzzled bears clumsily danced to the

> melody; it was hard to say whether the men or the bears deserved to rank higher in the scale of civilization. The women were ragged, dirtier, and more unkempt looking than the men, led each a pony fitted with a packsaddle, on which was piled a miscellaneous lot of camp-equipage with a couple of little children stacked on top of the pile, while one carried an infant in a basket slung on her hip. Two philosophizing looking donkeys, one bearing a load of bundles so big that only its nose and tail were visible, brought up the rear. The men, the women, the bears, the girls and the children, all begged assiduously and persistently from the spectators, and the only self-respecting members of the cavalcade were the donkeys, who looked very much as if they were in the procession solely in discharge of a disagreeable duty and were themselves ashamed of the whole thing. The party, by their appearance, dress, and equipage, appeared to be Bohemian and Hungarian gypsies, but in a few words of English, which they had at command, professed to have come from European Turkey. If they really were from Turkey, they had failed to acquire respect for that tenet of the Mohammedan religion which enjoins abstinence from strong drink, for the whole party, men and women, appeared to take as naturally to the curse of Canada as if they have been brought up on it. One of the women went into a barroom, laid down five cents for a glass of whiskey, and tossed it off as neatly as it could be done. The party camped in Murray's grove about a mile north of here. Just before reaching the camping place one of the crowd met with a mishap. It appears, while a lad leading one of the large bears, with a monkey mounted upon its back, was walking across a platform in order to reach the house of Mr. Alex Taylor, one of the boards flew up, precipitating all three in a heap in the ditch. The boy was somewhat injured. Saturday morning they started for Clinton to take part in the Orangemen's procession.

The type of group described above moved around the country earning a poor living and attracting much attention. Tramps caused concern as the following item indicates. This article comes from the September 14, 1893 issue of the Times:

> "The country seems to be swarming with tramps who are doing more or less stealing from farm houses and stores, and it would be a safe plan to keep a close watch on them on every occasion. Doors and windows should be properly secured at night, and if you have a dog put him on a small allowance to get him in proper training for these unwelcome guests."

Gypsies passed through town from time to time as well.

Gill and Creech, then, were kept busy. In July 1888, Gill arrested a counterfeit gang member named Ben Mackenzie and Creech picked up a local citizen named John V., who, as the Times said, "was becoming very popular in his special line — larceny." He had stolen a watch from the bartender of the Central Hotel. Another of the Constable's jobs in these years was the 'removal of indigent persons to the County Poorhouse', also known as the

Huron County House of Refuge

In July, 1902, James Creech was either fired or resigned as Constable, Street Commissioner and Collector. It seems that Council had apparently considered the possibility of replacing Creech. Thomas Bissett had applied for the job in 1894 saying that "Mr. Creech has been a good servant, though performing nothing that would entitle him to a life lease of the office." Bissett had offered to take the job for $300 but Council decided to stick with Creech at a $365 salary. Tom Bissett was incensed and demanded an explanation from Council for robbing the village of $65. Council, he felt, was being negligent in its duties.

In any event, Creech was finally replaced by Wesley J. Bissett at $365 a year in July of 1902. Bissett's duties were similar to those performed by Creech. Bissett was on the job in the fall of 1902 when the Council and the School Board disagreed over who was to pay for Halloween damage at the school. The Board said Council should pay since the village was responsible for protection to persons and property. Council, of course, replied that it had hired three extra Constables and that was all it could do.

Bissett received just as much criticism as his predecessors and as much as his successors would receive since village or small town police seldom please everyone. People complained in 1909 about cows and hogs wandering loose. But Bissett and Council did nothing despite the 1908 Cow By-law which required that cows be herded from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Under this by-law, cow owners had to hire a man to collect the villagers' cows. The herder usually took the cows along the roadsides outside of the town. But cows still wandered at large and Thomas Brock complained that Constable Bissett had placed his cow in the town yards and thereby prevented the cow from returning home. Animals were frequently the cause of problems for the police. In 1891 the Advocate demanded a by-law prohibiting dogs from running at large. "Useless dogs should be taken to the woods and quietly shot," said the editor. In the Fall of 1891 "nefarious" hen roost robbers were detected. They were employees of the salt well and had been stealing chickens at night. They "skipped" town when warrants for their arrest were issued.

Once in a while Bissett pleased someone. In March, 1909 he caught the boys who had "thrown eggs at Principal L. C. Fleming's house." He also locked up William B. for failing to provide the "necessaries of life for his family." By 1915 Bissett was earning $525 per year. By 1920 he received $750. He had tried in 1919 to reduce the rowdyism on Main Street, perhaps successfully since he got a raise. He had not, however, caught the spring time "peeping tom" who put a ladder up to bedroom windows to see what he could see!

Wes Bissett remained on the job until 1930 when he died at the

age of 76 having served as Chief Constable and Street Commissioner for nearly 30 years

Bissett was succeeded by John Clark Norry who was appointed Chief Constable and Street Commissioner in 1930 Norry had come to Exeter in 1896 and had been employed by the Sutherland and Innes Company in their stave factory He had worked for the village laying cement walks in 1909 and had worked on the paving of Main Street in 1920 Norry was reputed to be an expert in the installation of drains and he is supposed to have known where every drain in the village was located Norry died in 1961 at the age of 84, he served as Constable for 23 years until 1953

In 1931 William Wareing was appointed as village night watchman and was later made night constable with full police status He served until 1950 when he resigned saying "There's no use asking me to stay because I can't live on $27 50 a week

Over the more recent years the Exeter police force has been gradually expanded to five men who can be accurately described as professionals and whose duties no longer include collection of various taxes ringing the town hall bell, cleaning the hall and so on.

Another municipal agency was the Board of Health The Board was possibly constituted in the 1870's but the first records date from 1886 The Board in that year consisted of the Reeve Dr Rollins the Clerk M Eacrett, J P Clarke and Thomas McCallum By way of illustrating the work of the Board the following cases are noted from the 1886 records The Board had two officers to whom it delegated responsibilities The Medical Officer of Health was Dr Lutz and the Sanitary Inspector was James Creech

In February 1886, George Willis complained about an offensive stable owned by John Wood Willis appeared before the Board saying that "he would be compelled to remove from his house if it were continued" William Grigg reported that the odour from the stable was such as to cause a sickening sensation The Board of Health held a court of inquiry in Fanson's Hall and found Wood innocent of having an offensive or harmful condition at his stable.

The Board dealt with water closets privys (which had to be 100 feet from the house), disposal of slops disposal of excreta from privy vaults and similar items In their end-of the-year report the 1886 Board said "we have endeavoured to discharge our duty faithfully and some of it has not been the pleasantest Indeed, it probably was not

Over the years until the 1920's or 30's when the Board was dissolved it dealt with complaints about the creek which was in an extraordinary unsanitary condition On September 1 1887 the

Times contained the following editorial. It is quoted at length because it presents a good picture of conditions:

> "The health of the southern part of the village is not now nor has it for years been as good as it might be; it falls far short of being as free from fever and other germs, as is the center and northern part of the place. Whatever the cause may be, the residents along Huron and Ann Streets have for years been the victims of typhoid fever, the majority of which, if not all, being endemical cases. Why should this be? There appears to be every reason that we should have one of the healthiest places in the Province in which to live. Where the land is well drained, we never hear of a case of endemic sickness. What sickness there is is confined to that portion of the village lying south of Ann Street, where we understand the sanitary regulations are not of the best. The land lies low and is poorly drained, which together with the recent climatic conditions rendered that district more liable to such diseases. But the real and more prevalent cause of typhoid fever is filth, and if there is any one place in the village where filth accumulates faster than another, it is in the cesspool or open drain which crosses Main Street in the vicinity above mentioned. For years there has been an accumulation of debris in this drain, which becoming stagnate, impregnates the air in its precincts with fever germs and not until this drain is covered or regularly cleaned out will the neighbourhood be free from disease caused by such nuisance. If the Board of Health do not feel inclined or prepared to grapple with it, the Council should look into the matter and nothing should be left undone or unattempted to correct the existing evils. We are only voicing the sentiments of the public when we ask for an immediate and effective investigation into the cause of the fever sickness in the southern part of the village."

Not only the creek but the Ausable River area was used as a dumping ground from the very early years. In the 1890's the Times complained:

> "The southern banks of the Sauble river ... are made to present a disgraceful sight, by their being used as a dumping ground for all kinds of debris ... The Board of Health should take the matter in hand and have the practice stopped, not only from a health standpoint, but to reclaim a pleasant, leisure walk along the river. The citizens are not to blame for the disgraceful state of the river banks as this is the only spot where refuse can be dumped, and it must be dumped somewhere. On the council falls the onus of blame, as repeatedly it has been suggested that they purchase a hole somewhere where such refuse can be deposited, far enough out to be of nuisance to no one ... We would suggest that a lot in the old gravel pit on the lake road, be purchased from Mr. A. McDonnell. The holes there are of little value to the owner, but would make a splendid dumping ground."

The Board was concerned about diseases like typhoid which was very prevalent in 1888. Smallpox, measles, scarlet fever, indeed, all communicable diseases concerned the Board. Unsanitary conditions contributed to disease and the Board did its best to have the "removal of excreta from privy vaults" done carefully; to have drains, cesspools, wells, garbage, slaughterhouses, disposal of offal, sale of meat and many other things looked after properly, but people were very careless and did not respond well to requests to prevent various forms of contamination.

The Medical Officer of Health visited infected houses and disinfected them as described below:

> "The Board of Health have purchased an apparatus for the disinfection of houses after diptheria, scarlet fever, consumption, etc. A new disinfectant formaldehyde is used. A room and its contents exposed to the vapor from it for four or five hours are found to be completely freed from germs of any infectious or contagious disease. Sulphur has not been found to be satisfactory for that purpose, so the Board, following suggestions from the Provincial Board, purchased this machine, which already has been found to work well, and will be of inestimable value in preventing the spread of disease. Not alone is it useful after infectious diseases, but of great use in removing and destroying bad odors, etc., which sometimes penetrate or exist in some dwellings."

Smallpox appeared from time to time and caused the town some concern as it did in 1913. The following items illustrate this concern:

> "As the Board of Health View the Situation"
>
> "We wish to state facts in connection with the smallpox scare in Exeter. From January last a few of the children have had what their parents called chicken pox. In most cases no physician was called. But where one was called in, in every case but one the Dr pronounced the case chicken-pox and quite mild at that. That case was a grandson of Ex Reeve John Taylor. In that case the Dr called was suspicious of smallpox. He called in Dr McNally Dutne M H O. He withheld his decision on the case but called in Dr Bell, Provincial M H O. He examined four cases and pronounced the severest as one of the semi-confluent type of smallpox. Some of the doctors still maintain that it is only chicken-pox. Be that as it may young Taylor is improving every day. The local Board of Health at once proceeded to quarantine, disinfect and clean up the town of every epidemic. Exeter so far as the scare is concerned is just as safe to enter and leave as it ever was. There is no danger whatever.
>
> W J Heaman Reeve
> A Quackenbush M D M H.O
> H E Huston Chairman

> "The Smallpox Scare
>
> Exeter is in quarantine, travellers skipped the town on the first freight express or democrat wagon anything or everything to get out in a hurry. Passengers getting off at London from the L H & B. are undergoing the strictest scrutiny and vermin reigns the only thing lacking is that we are not dying off by the wholesale; according to the

> city dailies. But according to inside information there are but a few houses in town quarantined, business is going on in its normal way; medical men are of different opinions as to most of the cases that are being placarded but in any event every precaution is being taken even to the point of ridiculousness in the minds of some to protect both the citizens and those coming to town. If it is smallpox it isn't going much further but will leave town in a hurry if the Board of Health and citizens have their way.
>
> For several weeks what was diagnosed as chickenpox and what a great many still think was chickenpox has been prevalent in town, among the small children. Smallpox was first suspected in the case of Reginald Taylor, 12 year old grandson of Mr. John Taylor. Mr. McNally of Owen Sound, district Health Officer, was called in but he refused to pronounce the case as it seems several of the symptoms of smallpox were lacking. Dr. McNally in turn sent for Dr. Bell, Provincial Health Officer. Dr. Bell visited four homes and pronounced it smallpox. Steps were at once taken to have all homes where chickenpox had been treated quarantined.
>
> A meeting of the Board of Health and School Board was called and it was decided to take every precaution. The school, churches, skating rink and bowling alley were closed up. The Board of Health are wise in taking these steps as it ensures safety not only to our townspeople but those who are coming into town. The fact that all homes where the disease has been suspected is being thoroughly disinfected and every precaution is being taken ensures safety to all. The disease has been among the children and some cases have been traced back for two months but all have had to undergo the ordeal of fumigation. The quarantine on most of the places will be lifted this week.
>
> Public vaccination is being held at the Town Hall and all school children must be vaccinated. Older persons who have not been vaccinated for some time are recommended to become so at once.

Cholera was a threat from time to time, although it never appeared in epidemic proportions in Huron or indeed in Ontario after 1866. There are few records to indicate the extent of the disease in Exeter although in 1884 Dr. Hyndman urged that "In view of the threatened outbreak of cholera preventative measures be taken such as the removal of night soil which should be deodorized and mixed with lime and ashes." He also urged the cleaning of the creeks, backyards, wells and other problem areas.

Typhoid occurred in serious proportions. 1891, for example, was a particularly bad year.

In 1918, 1919 and 1920, influenza struck Exeter claiming several lives including Thomas Creech whose obituary is given below as an illustration of how the disease would claim even the young and strong.

> 'The death occurred on Tuesday evening, December 17th, of Thomas Garnet Creech, Canadian Express Agent at Exeter, at the age of 36

> years, 2 months and 6 days. The late Mr. Creech had been ill only ten days of influenza, following a heavy cold, which he contracted two or three days before taking his bed. He was of a rugged constitution and was given every possible attention, and even to the last, hope was entertained that he would recover. But the disease had too firm a hold and he gradually sank."

During the epidemics the churches were closed and public gatherings were prohibited by the Board of Health. The Board also advised the villagers "to keep from having the disease — keep away from those who have it if you can; build up the body by eating nourishing foods, dressing comfortably, getting lots of sleep, living in the open air and bright well ventilated rooms, disinfecting the mouth, nose and throat with chloretone or listerine, or sulphate of quinine".

Over the years, the problems dealt with by the Board of Health have gradually diminished. Medicine, better sanitation, improved water supplies, control of dumping, and pure food laws, have contributed. The town has secured a dumping ground which has been in use for about 20 years. The dump was secured only after a law-suit involving George Shaw and the town. Animals are now controlled in town; the cow problem no longer exists. There isn't a cow left within the corporation limits. Indeed, there are few domestic animals left in town. In 1893 in Exeter there were 1882 people, 90 dogs, 144 horses, 189 cows, 13 sheep and 80 hogs. With the elimination of domestic animals the manure disposal problem disappeared and it was a problem with the horse population alone producing about one and one-half tons of manure per day. The outside toilet has gone and with it the disposal problem. The "honey dipper" is now a phrase from the "golden" past. The open ditch which long caused a sanitation problem in the south part of the town has been closed in for most of its length. A sewage system serves most of the town now and in many ways there is less obvious organic pollution now than there was in the past.

Perhaps this is the logical place to mention the provision of hospital services in Exeter. South Huron Hospital was opened in 1953. Prior to this various forms of hospital service had been provided in nursing homes, maternity homes, and private hospitals. For example, C. B. Snell tried to operate a hospital in the old Pickard house which stood south of Snell Bros. garage. The present R. Pooley house on Huron Street and the Ausable office functioned as maternity homes. Dr. Hyndman had a small hospital in his office. In 1944 the Charles Gidley house on William Street was willed to the village for use as a hospital. After considerable debate Council declined acceptance of the house.

In 1949 the Exeter Lions Club led a movement to erect a

hospital in Exeter and in that year plans for a 25 bed hospital were prepared. The proposed site was on land owned by R. E. Pooley on Huron Street East. The Lions hospital committee which worked on the project included Elmer Bell, Chas. S. MacNaughton, Tom Pryde, Dr. Dunlop and Herb Eilber. This committee led the drive for funds. In September 1949 the South Huron Hospital Association was formed with the following officers: E. D. Bell, Chairman; W. G. Cochrane, Treasurer; R. N. Creech, Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. Dunlop and C. S. MacNaughton.

By June of 1950 it had been decided that the hospital would be built in Riverview Park and a Board of Trustees was elected by the subscribers. E. D. Bell was named chairman of the Board. W. G. Cochrane and R. N. Creech were elected treasurer and secretary respectively. However doubts about the site continued to affect the Board's planning. "A strong movement led by Mr. Ted Buswell sought to preserve Riverview Park." Don Southcott said it was too late to save the park. Council had offered Riverview Park in 1950 to the hospital board but in view of the objections of Buswell and others, in January 1951 Council rescinded its previous motion to deed the park to the hospital association. In February 1951 Ted Buswell presented a petition signed by 550 Exeter citizens requesting that the Park be preserved and that the hospital be built elsewhere. E. D. Bell was disappointed saying that one "couldn't find a better site in all of Ontario." Other sites were considered including Canning Factory property and a site north of the river.

In May 1951 the Carling property became available but it was not until November 1951 that the Hospital Association finally decided to purchase the Carling estate and in the spring of 1952 the hospital was finally started. Financing for the project came from local subscribers, the federal and provincial governments, charitable organizations such as the Atkinson Foundation and the local municipalities. The building was opened in January 1953. Since that time the hospital has been enlarged and improved.

The cemetery became a municipal responsibility in 1903. Council appointed a Board in 1903 consisting of Dr. Lutz, J. Senior, William Weekes, F. W. Gladman, and Thomas Prior to administer the cemetery. The Exeter Union Burial Grounds had been established in 1864 when five acres were acquired by a board of trustees. The first trustees were Thomas Gidley, A. Freeman and William Sanders. The cemetery grounds gradually deteriorated to the point in 1900 that the Times described it as a "disgrace to the Community." A group of people including John Allison made an effort to improve the grounds. In 1901 a new Board for the Exeter Union Burial Grounds was appointed. These trustees represented Exeter, Usborne, Stephen and Hay townships. The by-laws and regulations governing the Burial Grounds were drafted by Dickson and Carling and came into effect on April 11, 1901. The new Board began to improve the grounds. John Allison planted 134 spruce trees. Farmers brought in top soil and men straightened the stones. A caretaker was hired by the new Board in 1901 and in 1902 a house was built for the caretaker. Exeter granted $200 towards the house. About this time, four acres were added to the original five. In 1924 another nine and three-quarter acres were acquired.

In 1903 Council assumed full responsibility for the cemetery and has appointed a Board since that time. In that year Charles Southcott left $100 towards a permanent maintenance fund for the cemetery. This was the beginning of the perpetual care fund. The Times urged others to "follow the example of the late Mr. Southcott in providing for the proper maintenance of their burial plots".

The condition of the roads, streets and sidewalks in Exeter has probably received more discussion than any other single municipal item. It is difficult to think of another topic that has brought more abuse on to the Council than the roads. In 1875 Dr. Browning told Council to get some ducks and let the ducks "eat the mud" on the streets. Browning advised Council that it was a well-known fact that ducks ate mud. In April, 1877 the Times remarked on the condition of the streets:

> "The recent thaw and warm rains have made the streets very slushy and disagreeable and some of the crossings are almost impassable for the pedestrians, many find themselves up to their knees in water and slush."

Every spring the streets would become impassable morasses of mud. Wagons would be up to their axles in mud. The Times said "if we expect good business we must accommodate the farmers with good roads". In the summer the roads became dusty and unpleasant. The streets were in their best condition in Winter when the snow made sleigh travel comfortable. Although in winter the pitch holes did make some road areas more like roller coasters than roads. For example, in February, 1897 there were over 100 pitch holes, three to four feet deep in the section of road from the river north about one mile.

Litter and filth added to the general unpleasantness of the streets. Garbage, waste, spit, manure from horses and cows accumulated. In 1904 the Advocate remarked that "the dirty, filthy practice of spitting tobacco juice on the windows and walks along Main Street is becoming altogether too common"[41]. In 1901 the Council had passed a by-law prohibiting the spitting of tobacco juice, throwing banana and orange peels, paper and other litter on the walks and roads. The WCTU asked Council to stop the practice

of spitting on the walks but Council was unable to prevent the expectoration of the rich brownish-yellow streams that stained walks and windows. In 1937 the Times-Advocate urged each person to look after his frontage and clean up the litter and to "jack up the local council" to clean up the streets. It is interesting to note that the editorial did not suggest that people should not put the garbage and litter there in the first place. In 1970 Council passed an anti-litter by-law but people are still littering.

Construction of some of the early sidewalks in Exeter. This picture was taken at the corner of John and Andrew Streets about 1[illegible]. Some of the people are: The boy is a Baskerville. George Sanders (first left), Bill Sanders (third left), Dick Seldon (rear Left), Tommy Brock (with the beard), D[illegible] Sweet and Flossie Sweet (in doorway), Eli Snell (white shirt and black hat in centre), Frank Mallett (hat tipped back standing), Wes Bissett (black coat), Isaac Carling (rear smoking pipe), Harry Jennings (with cap in front of Carling), Tom Creech (to the right and rear of Bissett), Walter Westcott (leaning on the stone hammer), Sam Sanders (stripped shirt), Al Bissett (on wagon), Sid West (far right on wagon).

Council has talked about permanent roads for the past 60 years. Main Street was the first street to be permanently surfaced and this was done in 1920 when a concrete pavement was laid 36 feet wide in the business section and 24 feet wide elsewhere. The contractor was Hollingsworth of Hamilton and the price was $41,566 with the town supplying the gravel and the roller. With the concrete surface the mud and dust problem was eliminated from the Main Street. The annual gravelling and stonebreaking on Main Street was no longer necessary. Since the very early years men would each spring dump gravel on the Main Street and proceed to break up the larger stones with stone hammers. The road work was done under the direction of the Road Commissioner. Various men

held this position over the years. Isaac Whitlock, Anthony Holland, E. R. Bissett, Richard Pincombe, W. J. Bissett, were some. Labourers like Charles Baskerville and Silas Handford and Walter Westcott were hired casually. They broke the stone with the long hammers and spread the gravel. In 1911 these labourers got seventeen and one-half cents per hour. The teamsters drawing the gravel in their gravel boxes got 35¢ an hour. The gravel box carried a yard of gravel and was dumped by removing the floor boards. In the early years of this century Tom Creech supplied gravel for $3.45 a cord.

Street watering kept the dust down. This service was paid for on a frontage basis by the landowners along Main Street. In 1887 the charge was 8¢ per foot. In 1896 the watering cart was operated by Albert Bissett for $2.50 per day. In 1901 it was 13¢ per foot. The work was contracted out by Council annually. In 1901 Caleb Heywood did the job. The water for the water wagon first came from the mill pond and later from a well near the Town Hall. There was a windmill pump to provide the power at this well. In later years a water line was built from the mill pond to the town hall where there was a large water storage tank. The problem of dust became worse after the auto appeared. The Advocate on June 10, 1915 made the following suggestion:

> "That our citizens realize that the dust nuisance is a real one is emphasized by the fact that so many of the back streets have petitioned to have the streets watered and we venture the guess that if the dust is kept down on all the streets petitioned for the watering cart will have a very busy season. The suggestion has been made that the town follow out the system of oiling on the streets to be watered. If the town were to purchase another tank car of oil this could be done and done at a saving to the town so we understand. Besides this there is the saving of the roadbed. One great advantage the oil has is keeping down the dust on Sundays. Sunday is the day when our citizens enjoy sitting out on their lawns or verandahs and it is also a day when autos are out in numbers and on this day the water cannot keep down the dust."

But the gravelling and street watering ceased to be necessary on Main Street after 1920 and the laying of the concrete road. Also in 1920 Wellington Street was paved from Main Street to the Grand Trunk Railway depot. The farmers in the area contributed labour to the construction of this roadway since it was felt that they would benefit from having the road to the station surfaced.

The first sidewalks in the village were of course boardwalks. The initial sidewalk construction was undertaken in 1876 when boardwalks six feet wide were constructed on both sides of Main Street from Huron to Gidley. Four foot walks were built from Gidley to the Lake Road and from Main Street to the Station. Board crossings were also constructed across Main Street at several locations to enable pedestrians to get across the mud. Around the turn of the century "granolithic" walks were being constructed to replace the plank walks. In 1903, for example, a "granolithic" walk was constructed from Huron Street to the Metropolitan Hotel corner. In addition six crossings were built. The work was done by the Royal Artificial Stone Paving Company of Guelph. Council raised the money by the sale of debentures to C. H. Sanders. More "granolithic" walks were laid in 1903 on Huron Street and Victoria Street. Cows walked in the construction area damaging the freshly laid walks and adding to the cost.

The sidewalks in 1900 were still mainly plank with some new granolithic walks. A letter to the Advocate in September 1900 illustrates the feeling of the citizens about the walks:

> As I moved down street this morning I came across many places where the sidewalks were literally flooded with tobacco juice, melon seeds and peels, banana peels, cigar stubs and ashes, and other unsightly messes sufficient to cause nausea or even the turning of a delicate stomach. You seem to see more of these unsightly things on Saturday night, Sunday and Monday mornings, although more or less at all times. Is this not a disgrace to our town or our ladies mop up this collection of unhealthy trash with their skirts as they move along unless they ride a wheel or wear bloomers. It is to my mind simply abominable in the extreme. Think it over and see if we can't improve on this matter. I am a user of tobacco myself and I therefore know it is not necessary to stand and squirt a quart of juice in a pool on the centre of the sidewalk.

The streets were lit in the early years by gas lights. In 1884 Samuel Fanson was the lamp lighter and that year there were eight lamps in the business section which burned all night. Later on the constable took on the lamp lighting job. More is said elsewhere about the provision of street lights.

Roads continued to occupy much of Council's time. In 1928 Reeve C. B. Snell was urging the town to construct permanent roads and thereby save money over the years. Snell pointed out that during the preceding four years the village had spent $25,000 on the roads and streets. Mr. Snell felt that by debenturing funds to build permanent roads the cost would be reduced in the long run. Councils have grappled with this problem for the past 40 or 50 years and at present the town does have a number of permanently paved streets.

Much more could be said about streets and roads. A new iron bridge was built in 1888 over the Ausable. Named the "Victoria Bridge" it served the village until the winter of 1941 when it collapsed. A new bridge was erected in May of that year. We could discuss the changes on Main Street, for example, the change to angle parking with the removal of the old curbs in 1934, the new lights in 1935 the major construction and new lights in the 1960's could all be discussed in detail but space really does not permit an extensive treatment of these projects here.

In addition to the roads and the streets the other major issue that has faced Council for 100 years has been drains. Drainage has been bad in Exeter because of the level land and the heavy clay soil. Drains were put in on the streets to provide drainage for the cellars but flooding of basements occurred frequently. Selected items illustrate this problem.

March 1920

> Exeter had its own little flood that was serious enough for the time on Friday of last week. The creek that runs through between James and Huron Streets went on a rampage for several hours. Some who have been residents of town for many years say that it was the worst they have ever seen. Mrs. Pickard, whose property borders the creek says she remembers once when it was as bad. Just at noon the creek began to swell and it rose until the lots on either side were covered by several feet of water. The stable of Dr. Hyndman was flooded. The water was running over the road on Andrew Street almost a foot deep. Cellars on either side were filled.

September 1927

> Exeter experienced a miniature flood on Saturday morning when the creek which runs through the south part of the town overflowed and flooded the property east of Main Street. Water was running over the roads and pedestrian traffic was almost blocked. The water crossed Main Street and people had to be taken over in autos or get their feet wet. The creek that runs under the Ford Garage crosses Main Street and runs along Ann Street was not able to carry the water and it began to pile up behind the buildings on the east side of Main Street.

Similar floods occurred in 1929, 1937, 1950 and 1954. In February 1954 a river ran through the heart of town 300 feet wide. Gordon Koch, a teacher at the high school was marooned at noon at home on Ann Street and phoned H. L. Sturgis, the principal who told him to charter a boat but get to school. Another major flood occurred in the downtown area when the creek again flooded in July 1969 after a tremendous 3 hour rainfall. The south part of the town has now a small spillway and the creek which exists naturally here is now enclosed in a large tile through most of the town. This creek in addition to flooding the south part of the village from time to time contributed to other problems. It was a convenient dumping place and people threw garbage, offal, manure, dead animals and all manner of filth into the creek. It was a constant source of complaint for this reason as well as the flood danger.

The provision of a major sewer system for the town was first seriously considered in 1947 when a preliminary survey indicated a cost of $150,000. In 1949 Reeve A. J. Swartzer began a sewer system

with the construction of a major sewer on William Street. Little more was done, however, toward the system until the late 1950's. Finally in 1961 Council and the OWRC reached an agreement and in 1962 construction of a sanitary sewer system began. Much of the town is now serviced.

The provision of water and electricity are other important services.

The existence of a water works in Exeter dates from August, 1900. At that time a water works system "on a small scale was inaugurated for street watering purposes". When it was tested it "worked admirably". The system consisted of a six horse power gasoline engine which was located at the river. This engine drove the pump which forced water through the main which had been installed along Main Street. The water was forced into two tanks "about sixty feet high" at the Town Hall. The pressure was "so strong that the two large tanks could be filled in less than an hour". The engine, pump and pipes cost $2,000. In addition to watering the Main Street, which was still unpaved the Council planned to sell water to people for lawn watering and to mill owners along the way.

There is no record of any significant additions to this system until 1909. In that year Council passed a by-law authorizing the borrowing of $27,000 for the purpose of building a water works. Council negotiated the purchase of "that part of the river bed and banks of the Aux Sable River known as the Mill property" from James N. Howard. Howard had operated a small power plant in the old grist mill which had formerly stood on this property. The price paid was $1,700. This property is now Riverview Park. In 1910 Water Commissioners were provided for in by-law Number 8 and in 1911 Council passed a by-law setting up the procedure for the management and regulation of the Water works. There was a pumping station at the river and the water was forced to the water tower located behind the Town Hall. The purchase of the mill property had included the old dam which required considerable repair and the dam was for all intents rebuilt at this time. This storage supplied the water for the system. All of the water in the system came from the river and was not, therefore, suitable for drinking. The primary reason for installing the system was of course, to provide fire protection for the Village. Mains were constructed along Main Street and the principal streets in the core of the Village. Gradually pipes were extended to the periphery of the village; for example, in 1915 1060 feet of four inch main was built along Huron Street from Carling Street to the railroad. The project cost $800 and was designed to give fire protection to fifteen frame houses in the area. Sometime between 1910 and 1915 a main had been built to provide the Grand Trunk Railway with water at their Exeter yard. The

Railroad paid $300 to $450 a year for this service.

Residential properties were serviced by the system if the owner wished to install plumbing but as was mentioned the water was not drinkable. Many houses did use the service for washing, toilets if they had one, lawn watering and so on. Signs in the wash room of the Central Hotel, which was the first of Exeter's hotels to have washrooms, warned patrons not to drink the water. For drinking water each property owner, business, and hotel had to rely on their own well. It was not until the mid 1930's that potable water was available to the villagers from the municipal system. But this development will be discussed later.

Much of this early water system still exists in that some of the old cast iron mains still exist and of course the water tower in the centre of town provides a major landmark although present plans call for its removal in the near future.

The provision of electricity to the village also predates the establishment of a commission. In the 1890's and early decades of the 1900's the provision of electricity was considered as a tremendous economic development. People did not take it for granted as we do now and all sorts of developments and ideas for the use of electricity were forthcoming. The Exeter Times in its June 17, 1897 issue reported on one of these electrical ideas. A sheriff in California had produced a remarkable solution. "To light a six roomed house for $1.00 a month by means of an electric mixture, which could be sold around the streets in rubber pails as a milkman delivers milk," was the idea of this man. "He used four cells ... in each cell were two poles of carbon and zinc. The results, however, are produced by the solution which, of course, is secret. ... It will easily make his fortune" said the Times.

Meanwhile in Exeter a much more prosaic electrical development had taken place. James N. "Cap" Howard had established a power plant of modest proportions in the old grist mill that James Pickard had operated on the south bank of the Ausable River. This power plant had been established in 1890; it was a wood burning steam plant and its small generator produced enough electricity to light a few lamps along Main Street and possibly to sell to a few individuals. The details of this plant of Howard's are obscure but it seems to have operated until 1897. According to Mr. Richard Seldon some of the material from this old plant or mill was used to build the house immediately north of the store at the corner of Wellington and Main Streets.

The next phase in electric power development in Exeter came in 1897 with the establishment of the "Exeter Electric Light and Power Company Limited". This company was incorporated in August or late July of 1897 with a capitalization of $10,000. The company's charter permitted them to install and operate an electric power plant and to sell electricity in the Village of Exeter. The Exeter Times reports that the company "will purchase an entirely new plant of the latest type and will operate the most perfect system extant".

The Board of Directors of the Company included Dr. C. Lang who was elected President of the Company. The other Directors were E. J. Spackman, merchant; B. S. O'Neil, Frank Wood, a local butcher and R.C.C. Tremaine, B. A. Sc. from Toronto. Tremaine seems to have been the driving force behind the venture and judging from his degree he must have been an engineer; he was to be the plant manager. The other stockholders included D. Johns, tailor; W. Bawden, contractor; R. S. Lang, H. Bishop, merchant; and R. H. Collins. Most of the shareholders were local people and they bought up the shares of the company very quickly since the stock was sold out by September 1897 a month or so after the company's formation. The company bought the Verity Plough Works building which stood at the corner of Main and Wellington Streets. The plant consisted of a General Electric 16 kw alternator and a 1-20 Royal arc machine. The circuit in the beginning was planned for six and one-half miles. The power was from "a boiler 65 x 14 with 54" x 3½ tubes and a 110 h.p. Brown engine 14 x 36. This plant was installed in either late August or September after the company had been fortunate enough in securing an excellent spring of water at the Verity building. The original plan was to generate power for 1500 incandescent lights.

The company had already been given a franchise to erect poles and string wires along the streets. The Council had also given the company a contract to provide lighting for the streets of the Village. This contract was dated August 16, 1897 and had been accepted by Council on a motion by Messers Rollins and Snell at the meeting of August 20, 1897. So during the summer of 1897, Exeterites watched as two hundred poles were erected and wired. This activity no doubt stimulated householders and businesses to also contract with the company. One of the first houses wired was the Pickard residence on John Street. It was up to the property owner to wire the house and make it ready to receive the connection from the company's circuit which was made under Tremaine's supervision. The Exeter Times urged "parties who intend installing the service to do so at the earliest conveniance" so they would be "wired up by the time the plant is in operation.

Electricity was lighting about 350 incandescent lights by the late fall of 1897 and a staff of workmen were busily engaged in wiring an additional 900 lights. The service was limited, as it was in most towns with steam plants, to the following hours, in the summer light was available from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. and in the winter from 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. and in the evening from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. although there is some evidence that a late service to midnight was also available. The boiler was the key and it had to be kept fired; wood was used whenever it was available but it was not as plentiful as the company had hoped; railroad ties, rails from old fences and so on were used. The problem is illustrated by this reference, about 1911 Mr. Richard Seldon traded all the rail fencing from his farm just south of the village for wire and the company was happy to do this since wire was cheaper than coal. However, coal was used when wood was not available. There were many interruptions particularly during thunderstorms which, if severe enough, resulted in the closing down of the generating plant.

The Company's rates are given below as they appeared in the advertising columns of the Exeter Times. The Times felt that "prices were so low that everybody should use the system".

House Lighting

Main Hall - $3.00 per annum per 16 c.p. or 4/5¢ per night.
1 parlor lamp $2.80 per annum per 16 c.p. or 7/10¢ per night
each subsequent parlor lamp $1.80

Dining room	$2.75 per annum per 16 c.p.
Kitchen	$2.75 per annum per 16 c.p.
Upstairs hall	$2.75 per annum per 16 c.p.
Spare Bedroom	$1.50 per annum per 16 c.p.
Ordinary Bedroom	$1.75 per annum per 16 c.p.
Cellar	90¢ per annum per 8 c.p.

Commercial Rates

1-5 lights	$4.50 per annum per 16 c.p.
5-10 lights	$4.40 per annum per 16 c.p.
10-15 lights	$4.25 per annum per 16 c.p.
15-20 lights	$4.10 per annum per 16 c.p.
20-25 lights	$4.00 per annum per 16 c.p.
25 plus lights	$3.90 per annum per 16 c.p.

"General practise has proved it to be more satisfactory for the consumer to own everything within his own walls. The foregoing low rates have been figured on this basis and in order to assure them the following nominal initial charges are made for wiring with lamp complete:

open or cleat	$1.35 per light
concealed	$1.70 per light

The advertisement was signed
by R. C. C. Tremaine, Manager

The Exeter Electric Light and Power Company had a very successful first year of operation and in the summer of 1898 declared a dividend of 5%. The 1898 Board remained the same except for the addition of John Sweitzer in place of Frank Wood. In late 1898 Tremaine and Snell bought the controlling interest in the plant and operated it until 1915 or early 1916. The Company operated on the basis of evening and in winter morning service only during this time. The Village bought electricity for street lights and for the Town Hall spending around $1200 a year for the service. In 1914 the Municipal Electric Bill to the Company was $1385.10. There were about 50 street lights some carbon arc lamps and some incandescent. No record exists or at least, is known to indicate how many private customers the company had. As far as can be determined none of the hotels purchased electric power and many stores did not. Certainly quite a few homes, especially of the prosperous members of the community had the luxury of electric light even though it was limited and of low illumination.

In 1915 the contract between the municipality was to expire and it was in late 1914 and the first half of 1915 that considerable agitation developed in Exeter and area to have the Ontario Hydro Electric Power Commission bring service to Exeter. This of course is what happened and Snell and Tremaine's company ceased to operate. They sold the building after the first world war to S. Cann who operated a cider mill there for some years. The building, long a landmark in Exeter with the high chimney was torn down in recent years by an agency selling a different kind of "power". The site is now occupied by a retail store of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

In any case the supply of electricity to Exeter moved into its third period of development in 1914 when the Council was in touch with Ontario Hydro. There were no developments in 1914 and in 1915 the Village Council wrote Sir Adam Beck to "lay before him the matter of hydro-electricity for the municipality". The Council was not satisfied with "the way the hydro commission was working on this matter". There was some pressure on the Council which consisted of Reeve J. Taylor of the Ross-Taylor Company, B. W. F. Beavers, Dr. Roulston, J. R. Hind and Mr. Harton; the clerk-treasurer was T. B. Carling who operated the general store in addition to being clerk. The pressure referred to derived from the fact that the Electric Company's franchise expired at the end of 1915 and Council had to either secure Ontario Hydro power or renew the Company's franchise. Certainly this represented one of the most important decisions any council had faced in some time.

Exeter was not alone in agitating for hydro. The people of the area from Dashwood and Crediton east to Kirkton and Woodham

and from Hensall south to Lucan, where Ontario Hydro was already providing service were anxious for the power lines to reach them. St. Mary's also had hydro and it was to St. Marys that the area looked for leadership. On February 4, 1915 a meeting, chaired by Dr. Copeland, Mayor of St. Marys, was held at Kirkton. It was argued that the area between St. Marys and Exeter was one of the finest agricultural areas in Ontario and therefore it was not reasonable that it should be without the service of Ontario Hydro. The meeting also discussed the possibility of an electrified railroad line from St. Marys, through Kirkton, to Exeter and ultimately to the lake. This was the age of interest in electrified or radial railways in Southern Ontario. The London and Port Stanley Railway and the Lake Erie and Northern Railway from Kitchener to Port Dover were built around this time. Narcisse Cantin of St. Joseph also began talking about a Stratford to St. Joseph Radial Railroad shortly after World War I as well. However, the Kirkton meeting heard an Ontario Hydro Engineer named Castor explain that a power line from St. Marys to Exeter would "be a 13,000 volt line and carry 500 h.p." It would cost $1,500 per mile; a "step down station" would have to be built just south of Exeter at a cost of $4,000. Castor explained that the radial railroad would have to be a separate project, Ontario Hydro was not in the railroad business.

In February of 1915 the Council had further correspondence with Ontario Hydro indicating progress was being made. The Council continued to show interest in the St. Marys to Exeter Railway and agreed to participate in an Association agitating for government subsidies for the construction of such railways. In March 1915 Councillors Harton, Hind and Beavers went to Toronto as part of a delegation going to see Premier Hearst seeking a provincial subsidy of $3,200 per mile for the construction of radial railroads.

The Exeter Times began a campaign in the spring of 1915 to interest Exeter in Hydro. In one issue it had the following item.

Pertinent Hydro Questions

1. Do you want hydro?
2. Can we get it?
3. Are you working for it?
4. Will you vote for it?
5. Will you use it?
6. Will you as a citizen back the Council in going after it?
7. Would you like unsightly overhead wires in the business part of the town?
8. Do you want ornamental lights for the streets?

9. Do you want better street lights than at present?
10. Do you know what the present street lights cost?
11. Do you want 24 hour lighting service?
12. DO YOU WANT TO BOOM, EXETER?

The Times continued its campaign in June 1915 in support of the Council's pending arrangements with Ontario Hydro. Certainly council supported the idea, at least every indication is that B. W. F. Beavers was strongly in favour of it and he seemed to be a leading voice in Council. The Times asked the people again and again should we "connect up with hydro for twenty four hour service, or grant another franchise to the Electric Light Company". It went on to say "as usual Exeter has moved slowly and cautiously. Other towns have jumped into the hydro belt and have not regretted it. This has brought hydro power all around us — north, east, and south ... We want hydro! We must have it ... the extension of the present franchise is the only alternative and in that case the people's hands are tied during the term of the agreement ... now is the time for hydro, get out and boost it".

Under the heading HYDRO IS A GOOD THING the Times printed the following

H — stands for hydro. The power for all classes
Y — stands for yourself the voice of the masses.
D — stands for the die that has now been cast.
R — for the Reasons Why the BYLAW should PASS
O — for the OVATION when it's CARRIED AT LAST

The Times campaign was being directed at an apathetic, or at best, a moderately interested populace. The Council also tried to instill some interest among the people in Hydro by meetings, one such meeting was held in July of 1915 at which there was only a fair attendance. Council had asked Dr. Copeland of St. Marys to speak and he extolled the merits of Hydro. George Stanley of Lucan had also been asked to speak and he discussed the value of hydro to a community in stimulating commercial activity, he added that "Lucan would laugh in their boots" if Exeter defeated the proposed by-law. Caster of Ontario Hydro explained the values of hydro and its low cost stating that "washings can be done for 15¢ a month.

The by-law that Council was bringing before the people for their opinion was By-Law number 14 1915. The purpose of the by law was to provide for a $20,000 debenture issue to cover the cost of the necessary plant to distribute electric power. The electric power was to be supplied from Niagara under an agreement between the Village of Exeter and the Hydro Electric Power Com mission of Ontario. All the evidence indicates that the electorate approached the vote quietly, indicating, perhaps, to both the Council and the Press that there was little interest. But when the vote was held on the by-law on July 22, 1915, 70% of the eligible voters went to the polls and there were only seven dissenting votes in the unusually "quiet election". Council passed the By-Law in August and immediately signed the agreement with Ontario Hydro. The agreement called for the village to erect new poles, new conductors and new transformers. The cost of power supplied to the town was to be $43.70 per horse power. This price was based on the village using 200 hp or at least seventy-five percent or 150 h.p. However, the village was allowed five years to reach the agreed horsepower during which time it would pay for only what it used.

The Times was elated: "Hydro may not be perfection but it is the nearest to it we can get." Hydro will "make this progressive little town another link in the chain of places having white light from Niagara".

Once the agreement was signed erection of Exeter's new poles and wiring began in the fall. Street lighting was discussed and it was decided that 176 street lights would be put up; this would cost $3,640 per year for the hydro power. This compared with the 55 street lights in use in 1915, of which 36 were the carbon arc type and 19 incandescent; in 1915 the village had paid the Electric Company $1,550 for power for these lights. There was some interest in ornamental standards with underground cable in the business section from Anne Street to Sanders Street. In November 1915 Dr. J. W. Browning, J. G. Jones and thirty other merchants petitioned Council to put this type of street light and standard up in the business section. Council, on a motion by Hind and Harton refused to grant the petitioners wishes. As a result overhead wiring, wooden poles with somewhat ornamental fixtures went up on Main Street. Some of these old ornamental iron fixtures can still be seen on some of the back streets of the town.

Sometime in 1916 the Ontario Hydro high voltage lines reached Exeter from St. Marys. The "step-down station" was built and hydro came to Exeter. Stores, hotels, houses and so on were wired for hydro if they had not already been customers of the electric company. "King" Davis and other electricians had a busy time. The number of customers climbed until by 1920 it is reported that there were between 300 and 400 customers in the village. There are, however, no extant records to verify this.

With hydro in Exeter Council under advisement from the Ontario Hydro Commission undertook to set up a public utilities commission. Until this was set up the Fire, Water and Light Committee of Council was the responsible body; this meant, of course, that

Council dealt directly with Ontario Hydro. So, in 1917 the Exeter Public Utilities Commission was established and Council turned over responsibility for both water and electricity to the commission. On January 1st, 1917 two by-laws were "presented to the Electors" of the Village of Exeter for their approval. By-law number 8, 1916 was a by-law which provided for the establishment of a commission to assume responsibility for administering water and electric power services in Exeter. This responsibility had previously been part of the Village Council's duties. The by-law was approved by the voters 140 to 7. By-law number 9, 1916 was a by-law to provide for the construction of the works necessary to give full twenty-four hour a day service to the village. This was approved by the voters 129 to 9.

Consequently, Council following the wishes of the electors gave third reading to these two by-laws and delegated to a commission the responsibilities of providing the services of water and electricity. The first commissioners were in office as of January 1, 1917, they were in office by acclamation, a practice that was to become customary for the Commission since in the over fifty years of its existence the number of elections has been very small, perhaps two or three. The first commissioners were H. E. Huston, an insurance agent by profession and S. M. (Sam) Sanders one of the founders of the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company. B. W. F. Beavers, by virtue of his office as Reeve was the third member of the Commission. Mr. Beavers was a merchant operating a dry goods store about where Lindenfield's Hardware is today, later he acquired the Spackman business near the corner of John and Main Streets. Huston's term was for one year and Sanders for two years as provided in the by-law. Reeve Beavers had the two men draw lots to determine the length of the terms. Huston was elected as Chairman. In April of 1917 Mr. Sanders resigned and John R. Hind, manager of the Ross Taylor Company lumber yard which was located where The Beaver Lumber Company's yard is now, was appointed to take Sanders place. Hind served on the Commission for eleven years.

The men that Council periodically engaged to run the small waterworks were henceforth engaged by the Commission. Herman W. Doerr, an electrician, had sometime before 1917 been engaged by Council and in 1917 he became the manager of the waterworks and hydro service for the commission, his salary at this time was $70.00 per month.

When the Commission assumed administrative responsibility the village was almost half way toward its 200 h.p. agreement. In February, 1917 the billing by Ontario Hydro was for 80.4 h.p. and the Commission paid $279.12 for the month, as now, billings were based on peak load which occurred at 8.15 p.m. at this particular time.

The early years of the Commission did not see any great expansion of the waterworks system. The primary job in this department was maintenance of the existing system and minor periodic extensions. But Exeter did not expand much at this time so little additional main was necessary. In the hydro department the commission's crew which varied in size and in members constructed the lines and so on to the various parts of the town. Hydro power was delivered, for example, to the canning factory and to the other peripheral areas of the village. Not only did the Commission administer Exeter but also undertook in its first couple of years to administer the hydro facilities in Dashwood, Zurich and in 1923 the immediate rural area. This rural system had 130 customers. Once a month H. W. Doerr and, when he was hired in 1921, R. E. Russell would go to Dashwood and Zurich to read meters, render accounts, do the bookkeeping and make installations. The police village of Dashwood agreed to pay the Commission $150 per year for this supervisory service plus the costs of any installations made by the commission. The amount Zurich paid was probably somewhat higher. Mr. Doerr received an extra $8.00 per month in addition to his salary of $940 per year which he received as the Commission's Superintendent and Secretary. The Exeter Public Utilities Commission provided this service to these other communities for some years until the rural hydro division of Ontario Hydro was established in this area.

In these early years of hydro in Ontario there seemed to be a close affinity between local commissions and the Ontario Commission. One illustration of this relationship is exhibited by the following letter dated October 19, 1921 and addressed to Sir Adam Beck from the local commission:

> Dear Sir,
>
> It is with mingled feelings of sorrow and regret that we have learned of the sad bereavement you have suffered in the loss of your esteemed and much loved partner the late Lady Beck.
>
> If words could express our feelings, we could in a measure tell you of our deepest sympathy for you at this time, but words fail.
>
> We wish to extend to you our deepest expressions of sympathy and trust that you may receive strength from our Maker to bear you through this, your greatest loss.
>
> Signed John Hind
> Chairman

The Commission met in the Library in its early years since it did not have any building under its jurisdiction. Electric and water accounts could be paid at the office of T. G. Creech the express agent. Mr. Creech received some small remuneration for this ser-

vice. A few years later the building previously used as a harness shop by P. Frayne and M. Quance in Main Street served as the Commission's office and shop. The Waterworks and Hydro department payroll in the 1920's and early 1930's included from time to time various part time or casual labourers as well as the small permanent staff. Such names as R. E. Russell and W. Lutman were among those employed. Lutman was the only employee in the history of the Commission to die on the job by electrocution. He was killed in 1931. E. "King" Davis, A. Kernick, B. Cunningham, John Norry, Thomas Welsh, James Parsons, Leo Hennessey, Harry Lewis, Elmer Reeder, Archie Ireland, Dewey Ward, Ed Sims, C. B. Carruthers and many others were also employed over the years. Rosa Dearing who was office clerk was the only female employee prior to the mid 1930's.

As has been mentioned from 1917 to 1934 the Commission did not undertake any major waterworks construction but in the 1930's it was becoming apparent that something had to be undertaken by way of a potable water supply. In 1934 the Chamber of Commerce petitioned the Village Council to undertake an examination of the feasibility of installing a potable, domestic water system. Evidently men like L. J. Penhale, manager of the canning factory, was very interested in a water supply. Albert Traquair and other prominent citizens were strongly urging provision of a domestic water supply. Many people, however, had no interest in the scheme, since they had good wells. In March 1934, an informal meeting of a number of representative ratepayers was held in the Exeter Library and the following resolution was adopted on a motion by B. W. F. Beavers and B. M. Francis:

> "that this meeting request the Municipal Council to take the necessary steps to secure available information as to the cost of installing a suitable system of drinking water for the Village of Exeter"

The Council referred this to the Commission. This Commission engaged the services of D. H. Fleming a Toronto consultant. The Council agreed to hold a vote on the debenture by-law for the waterworks extension and improvement. This vote went 246 for and 96 against. The situation regarding water in Exeter at this time was one of increasing seriousness. Individual wells upon which people depended for their drinking water were becoming polluted from weeping tile. In several homes it was necessary to boil well water before using it. The river water which was in the village water system was not fit to drink.

Test drilling commenced in June 1934. Considerable interest was shown in a well on the property of W. F. Abbott. A test well was dug at this site on Marlborough Street and this well provided

potable water. It did not however, become a producing well, for several years.

In 1936 land and springs on the farm of Mr. Garnet Frayne were obtained and rights of way for a 6 inch pipe line to the old pump house at the river also were obtained through the properties involved which were owned by Messers Frayne, Yellow and Dow. A reservoir was built near the old pumphouse with a capacity of 250,000 IG to receive the water from the springs where a motor and pump were installed to pump the water to the reservoir. The interior of the old water tower which was erected in 1909 was also cleaned and painted. In 1937 the old pumphouse at the river was sold and removed and the present pumphouse constructed. By 1939 a large part of the village was receiving a supply of drinking water from the Abbott well, which evidently turned out to be on the road allowance rather than on his property as was originally thought and from the springs on the Frayne farm.

In March 1937 the Commission set rates as follows:

Private Dwellings one or more taps	$ 6.00
with bath	3.00
with toilet	3.00
Public Garages washing cars	25.00
not washing cars	12.00
Bakeshops	9.00
Dentist office	9.00
Doctor's office	9.00
Barber shop	9.00
Theatres with toilet	15.00
Butcher shop	9.00
Stores	9.00
Creamery	75.00
School	100.00
Huron Lumber Co.	25.00
Flax Mill	20.00
Chopping Mill	25.00
V. Cann	200.00
Green House	20.00
Hotel	60.00
Bowling Green	35.00
Arena	50.00
CNR	250.00
Canadian Canners	350.00
Hydrant	40.00
Tank of Water (Cash)	1.00

The total cost of this improvement and construction was $35,000

Another major commission undertaking in the 1930's was the erection on Main Street of cast iron "ornamental street light standards" with underground wiring. These replaced the lights that had served Main Street for the previous twenty years. These lights con tinued in use until 1966 when the present concrete poles with the fluorescent lights replaced them

By 1940 the waterworks consisted of the domestic system and the river supply. There were two sources of domestic water being tapped, that is, the Abbott Well on Marlborough Street and the springs on the Frayne farm. This water was collected at the reservoir near the dam and pumped to the system. The river supply was used only by the Canadian Canners for cooling purposes at this time. In 1939 the Commission was serving 308 domestic customers, 66 commercial customers and 5 industrial customers for water. By 1946 these figures were 531, 85 and 4 respectively. Ten years later in 1956 there were 890 domestic customers, 135 commercial and 8 industrial. The present figures are approximately 1 100, 140 and 15

During the war years almost no water main extension or improvement to the waterworks was undertaken. The period 1945 to 1950 however saw several important developments. During this time a third well, namely, the [illegible] Well just south of town was brought in to production in 1945. This well was never used very extensively since poor tests were obtained and its use was discontinued within a few years. In 1949 a major addition to the water system was completed. In that year the Moodie Well began to contribute water to the village supply. The cost of the 50 foot well, the three miles of six inch main from the well to the Village system and other works cost $48 000

In 1960 the Commission added a fourth well when it sank the Hicks Well primarily as a stand by or as an extra supply of water for dry periods. The table below summarizes the domestic sources of water that the Commission has.

WELL	GALLONAGE	DISTANCE
Frayne Springs	75 million	1 mile of 6" main
Marlborough Street Well	2.6 million	
Moodie Well	37.5 million	3 miles of 6" main
Hicks Well	5 million	1¾ miles of 6" main

The Frayne Springs source is the only water in the system that is treated in any way and chlorination of this supply began in 1966

The major waterworks job undertaken by the Commission during the post war period was, of course, the sharing and participation in the Morrison Dam project. For some years prior to 1958 when the dam was completed there had been considerable concern over the shortage of water in Exeter. In 1954 the Canadian Canners, Council and the Commission discussed the water supply problem. The Canning Factory had for years drawn water from the local dam; this had been done using a pump and engine which were set up at the dam. The water was carried to the factory in an above ground pipe. All of this equipment including the pipe were there only during the canning season. In 1955 the Commission built an 8 inch cast iron main from the local dam to the Canadian Canners plant. The pump, engine and small chlorinator were set up temporarily at the dam. 1955 was the first year that the Commission sold river water to the Canadian Canners. Before that the Canning factory had apparently operated the system. In 1955 the Commission sold 4 million Imperial Gallons of river water to the Canning factory.

But, as indicated the Canadian Canners considered that the potential supply in the local dam was inadequate and felt the town and the commission should do something to relieve this shortage. There was considerable discussion in 1954 and 1955 that the town and the Canadian Canners had some kind of agreement that if a guaranteed water supply were forthcoming the Company would undertake expansion of the Exeter plant. However, in 1955 Mayor R. E. Pooley said that "the town never had a written agreement with the company. It was a verbal understanding that if the Town secured an adequate water supply a sizeable addition would be erected" at the local plant. The mayor went on to say that a company official had assured the town that the company would still expand the factory if the supply of water from the proposed dam materialized. At the same meeting Reeve MacKenzie said that the purchase of Canadian Canners by the California Packing Company "makes our obligation to supply water even larger than before."

The Morrison Dam project was quite a controversial issue at the time. The Ausable Authority under whose jurisdiction the dam would be built was enthusiastic about the idea since a dam somewhere in this area had been recommended in the 1949 Authority report. Andrew Dixon, John Morrison and other members of the Authority urged its construction since it would provide a reservoir to store water for the low flow period and help control spring run off; it would also provide a recreational area of some merit. The Council and the Commission supported the dam's construction for other reasons: both bodies wished to secure the water supply that would be available for the Canning factory since it represented Exeter's principal industrial activity.

Not everyone, however, supported the project, in fact, a majority of the people of Exeter probably opposed the dam. In order to avoid delays the Council requested that the Municipal Board hold a hearing to determine whether or not a vote should be held on the proposal. At the hearing representatives of the Authority, the Council, and the Commission spoke. Authority Chairman J. A. Morrison urged its construction for conservation purposes. C. V. Pickard, Town Clerk said "the town gets five or six inquiries a year from industries wishing to locate but several have been turned away because of the shortage of water in town." He felt Exeter should do everything possible to secure more industrial and commercial activity to balance the disproportionately large residential assessment that the town had. W. G. Cochrane expressed his feeling that the dam represented Exeter's only answer to the water shortage problem. K. J. Lampman the Commission's manager pointed out that the Commission realized it would probably have to build a chlorinating and filtering plant. The Municipal Board ruled shortly after that no vote was required and the Council, Commission and the Authority which was the actual agency responsible for undertaking the work proceeded with the plans. The details, problems, price changes, tendering problems and so on occupied considerable time and cannot be gone into here. It is enough for our purposes to say that finally in 1957 the contract was awarded to the Pearce Construction Company of Hagersville who had submitted the lowest tender of $168,000; there were three other bids considerably higher. The dam itself was finished in 1958 and named the John A. Morrison Dam in honour of the Authority Chairman. The dam provided a storage capacity of fifty million gallons and when the stop logs were added an additional fifteen million gallons could be stored. This sixty five million gallons plus the local dam's five million gallons gives the Commission a source of some seventy million gallons to provide to the canning factory. With this source the factory's consumption increased from 2.5 million gallons in 1957 to 15 million gallons in 1960. In the years 1961 to 1972 the consumption has varied from 30 million gallons to 59 million gallons per year.

The cost of the dam was divided as follows

1	Usborne Township	$18,000
2	Various government grants	90,600
3	General municipal levy	9,060
4	Public Utilities Commission	81,540

This represented the largest single expenditure in the Commission's history. So after years of debate the dam was a reality. The objectors must admit now that a fine winter and summer outdoor recreation area has been provided and the Commission has increased its supply of water for non domestic purposes. In 1961 the Commission constructed a chlorinating and filtration plant at the river to handle up to 600 gallons per minute of river water. This represented another major expenditure in the Commission's efforts to supply the Canadian Canners with the water they required. It should also be remembered that the factory also is supplied with large gallonages of domestic water as well.

Other water works department undertakings in the recent years included main replacements, and major extensions. Among these major extensions was an eight inch main to the north end of the town. This was done in 1964 following a fire in that part of town. It is interesting to note that the Fire Underwriters Association had repeatedly criticized the Commission in the 1920's and 1930's for the very inadequate fire protection in the north part of the town.

At the present time then, the Commission operates a water works department which through nearly fifteen miles of main, supplies annually to all types of consumers up to 180 million gallons of water. This includes some 40 million gallons on the average from the river supply.

In the hydro department the Commission was able to do very little during the war years. In 1940 the number of hydro customers would have been about 400. The rates paid in 1940 included those given below

domestic	3¢ per kwh for the first 60 hours and 5¢ per kwh for over 60 hours. The minimum bill was about 83¢

Flat rate water heaters were 44¢ per 100 watts per month. The Ontario Hydro rates to the commission in 1940 were $34.50 per horse power per year. It will be remembered that this was about $10.00 lower than when Ontario Hydro first began supplying electricity in 1916.

Even after the war very little hydro work was done by the Commission aside from a few new services and some line replacement. The largest number of services installed would have been in 1947 when the war time housing area was serviced. This minimal amount of work in the hydro department was characteristic actually until 1958. It should be remembered, however, that the Commission did not have a staff until 1958. The only employees the Commission had were two office staff and Mr. K. J. Lampman who was the Ontario Hydro divisional manager. He doubled as Commission manager until 1958. Mr. Len Hennessey an Ontario Hydro employee as well, who was on what amounted to permanent loan to the Commission. This lack of staff was an important reason why the Commission did not undertake any extensive hydro works at this time.

In 1958 a major step was taken by the Commission. The present manager Mr. Hugh Davis was hired and a staff of linemen and ground men were engaged. Mr. M. Keating was taken on as foreman in 1958 as well. Thus the bulk of the work done in the hydro department during the last thirty years has been done since 1958. This work includes a very large amount of line and pole

replacement, the Commission now has $200,000 invested in this part of its plant. Transformers were added, the water heater control unit costing $13,000 was installed in an effort to control peak load. The office procedure was modernized and generally speaking under Mr. Davis' management the Commission has moved to modernize its operations.

In street lighting, too, considerable progress has been made since 1958. In 1958 there were 247 street lights in Exeter with a load of about 33 kilowatts; the investment was something over $5,000. There are now about 350 street lights with a kilowattage of about 59, and the street light plant is valued at $25,000; this figure, it should be noted, does not include the new fluorescent street lights on Main Street which were installed by the Commission at the request of the Council in 1966. These replaced the ornamental standards that had been installed in 1935. It is interesting to recall that in 1915 the village of Exeter had paid the Electric Light Company some $1,550. for lighting 55 street lights of very low illumination. In 1965 the Town paid the Commission $6,500. for lighting 330 lights of much greater illumination.

At present consumers in Exeter average a consumption of about 625 kilowatt hours per month. This is very high when compared to similar communities indicating presumably that the average Exeter household uses many appliances. For his electricity the consumer in Exeter pays about $6.75 per 500 kwh per month. There are some 1300 consumers of electricity now being served by the Commission. Perhaps it should be noted that the Commission is faced with buying its hydro from the H.E.P.C. at a rate much higher than other nearby towns. Exeter's Commission in 1967 paid $44.62 per kw per year. Seaforth paid $36.92 and Clinton $42.77. The figures are proportionately still the same.

In addition to modernization of the hydro plant the Commission also modernized its equipment and storage facilities since 1958. New vehicles were purchased and a new warehouse was erected behind the Commission's building on Main Street. This building occupied by the Commission on Main Street was, incidentally, acquired by the Commission on July 31, 1943 when it was purchased from the Bank of Montreal. It will be recalled that before being occupied by the Bank of Montreal it had been Molson's Bank.

Recent work by the Commission has included reconstruction of the power line along Main Street. The first stage of this was done in 1967 and stage two was undertaken shortly thereafter from the river to the north limits of the Town. This work removed the unsightly lines from the street since the line was built along the rear lot lines of the properties along Main Street. Concrete standards and fluorescent lights like those in the business section were extended

along the whole of Main Street.

Obviously, then, the present and future commissions have much important work to do. It is to be hoped that Exeter will continue to have men of integrity with a devotion to public service acting as members of the Commission that provides the Town with the basic services of water and electricity.

The Members of the
Exeter Public Utilities Commission

1917

H.E. Huston chairman
S.M. Sanders
B.W.F. Bowers Reeve
J.R. Hind replaced Mr. Sanders in April 1917

1924

J.R. Hind chairman
H.E. Huston
W.D. Sanders Reeve

1926

J.R. Hind chairman
William Ward
C.B. Snell Reeve

1928

William Ward chairman
P. Coates
C.B. Snell Reeve

1930

Wm. Ward chairman
P. Coates
B.M. Francis Reeve

1934

P. Coates chairman
Wm. Ward
W.D. Sanders Reeve

1935

L.J. Penhale chairman
Wm. Ward
Thos. Pryde Reeve

1937

L.J. Penhale chairman
Wm. Ward
W.D. Sanders Reeve

1940

L.J. Penhale chairman
Thos. Pryde
B.W. Tuckey Reeve

1948

L.J. Penhale
H.C. Rivers
B.W. Tuckey Reeve

1949

H.C. Rivers chairman
L.J. Penhale chairman
A.J. Swentzer Reeve

1951

L.J. Penhale chairman
H.C. Rivers
B.W. Tuckey Mayor

1952

L.J. Penhale chairman
H.C. Rivers
Wm. Cochrane Mayor

1955

L.J. Penhale chairman
H.C. Rivers
R.E. Pooley Mayor

1956

L.J. Penhale chairman
H.C. Rivers
R.E. Pooley Mayor
Wm. Cochrane replaced Mr. Rivers in May 1956

1957

L.J. Penhale chairman
Wm. Cochrane
R.E. Pooley Mayor

1961

Wm. Cochrane chairman
L.J. Penhale
R.E. Pooley Mayor

1962

Wm. Cochrane chairman
R.E. Pooley
E. Simmons Mayor

1965

R.E. Pooley chairman
M. Greene
E. Simmons Mayor

1966

R.E. Pooley chairman
M. Greene
J.H.W. Delbridge Mayor

1967

R.E. Pooley chairman
M. Greene
J.H.W. Delbridge Mayor

Secretaries and Treasurers
of the
Exeter Public Utilities Commission

S.M. Sanders
J. Senior
H.W. Doerr

Ross Dunning
K.J. Lampman
Dorothy Davis

Managers
of the
Exeter Public Utilities Commission

H.W. Doerr 1917-1934
Leo Hennessey 1934

K.J. Lampman 1935-1958
Hugh Davis 1958-

Exeter was incorporated as a village in 1873. In 1857 the village had, perhaps 300 people, by 1861 there may have been 500 and by 1873 the population was approaching 1000. By the early 1890's the population was almost 2000 and this marked the highest population the village attained until after World War Two. In 1947 the population was 1980 and in 1949, 2364. In 1921 there were only 1442 people, a drop of nearly 600 in 30 years. In 1961 the population reached 3000 and it has continued to grow but quite slowly.

Statistics for the years are available but they serve little purpose in this type of book. As an illustration the vital statistics for 1878 are given below.

Births	64		
Marriages	16	Brain fever	1
Deaths	28	Cancer stomach	1
Consumption	4	Jaundice	1
Convulsions	2	Sunstroke	1
Heart	2	Cyanosis	1
Apoplexy	1	Inanition	2
Gangrene of the lungs	1	Summer complaint	2
Inflammation of the lungs	2	Typhoid	2
Inflammation of the bowels	1	Bronchitis	2
Purpura Hemorragica	1	Unknown	1

By way of comparison in 1971 there were 153 births, 60 deaths and 64 marriages.

In 1878 the average age of the village population was 28. The oldest person was 76.

In 1950 with a population of 2609 the village of Exeter applied to the Ontario Municipal Board to change its status from a village to a town. The change was official on New Years Day 1951.

There are many other aspects of municipal history that could be mentioned. The construction of about 50 wartime housing units in 1947 and 1948 caused some stir in the municipality. S. M. Sanders charged the Council with "tyranny" because no vote was held to approve the $16,000 debenture that was involved. The changing tax rate would make an interesting study; the establishment of a Planning Board, the expansion of the town eastwards with new subdivisions are another feature of the town's changing geography. These are other aspects of municipal history that cannot be examined here.

As we noted at the beginning Ontario's communities have fortunately had persons who have been willing to serve their municipality as councillors and members of various boards and commissions. There were times in Exeter when the numbers who were willing to serve on Council were few but eventually someone always came forward who was willing to do the job of governing the corporation.

William H. Verity, the Plow King, and Family

The first building is the Molson's Bank. The second is Drew's Undertaking establishment. This picture dates from the 1880's. Dinney Furniture occupies both buildings now.

Stewart's "Big Bankrupt Store"

The Presbyterian Church about 1885

Baillie Leathorns Leading a Parade in the 1880's

Looking south along Main Street
Note the board walk and the old bridge

Clarence "Derry" Boyle

Nicholas Dyer Hurdon, manager of Molson's Bank and community leader in the late 1800's and early 1900's

First Hockey Provincial Champions Exeter J. Hawks 971-72

chapter 10

Politics in Exeter

"*They were all Conservatives and had been for years and years.*

(Leacock's Sunshine Sketches)

"Everybody in Mariposa was either Liberal or Conservative", but in Exeter they were mostly Conservative. Indeed, they were mostly Conservative! Exeter is one of those consistent communities when it comes to politics; in every single Dominion election since Confederation, Exeter has voted for the Conservative candidate. In every provincial election except two, Exeter has voted Conservative. The two exceptions were the years 1926 and 1929 when a majority of voters in Exeter cast their ballots for W. G. Medd, the Progressive candidate. Mr. Medd was a popular Exeter businessman and this more than his politics caused the departure from tradition. Exeter, then, has an almost one hundred percent perfect record. As Emerson remarked, "consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds"; politically Exeter obviously must have many great political minds.

Before Confederation Exeter formed part of the adjacent townships and the townships in turn formed part of the District of Huron. The first parliamentary election affecting Huron was in

1835. In that election Captain Robert Graham Dunlop, a Tory, defeated the Reform candidate Colonel Anthony Van Egmond. William McConnell would have been the only people living in what is now Exeter and few more joined them for some time. After the 1841 Act of Union created the Province of Canada, the new District of Huron was formed on October 14, 1841. The Huron District included the present Counties of Huron, Perth and Bruce and the townships of Biddulph and McGillivray. Goderich was the District seat.

The Rebellion of 1837 had little direct effect on the Exeter area since there were so few people here anyway. Generally speaking, Huron was Tory and thus against the rebels. The only reference to the Exeter area notes that a Capt. Longworth of the Canada Company went to London. He sent back word to a Dr. Hamilton in Goderich to bring twelve men to London for guard duty. The twelve men set out and where Exeter now is the twelve men and the Doctor halted and spent the night clustered around a fire, listening to the wolves howling in their host's yards. Louis Holman, Richard Hanhford and others joined Capt. Longworth and twenty other men and left to fight the rebels.

In the election of 1841 Dr. William "Tiger" Dunlop, a brother of the Captain, eventually won the seat. He had to petition the government, however, to win, since his opponent James Magill Strahan, the Reform candidate, had won the election. Dunlop's charges of irregularity convinced the three lawyers sent from Toronto as the election court and he took his seat as the District's first representative in the legislature at Kingston on June 13, 1842. The hearings were held in Rattenbury's Hotel and took 14 days. As it became apparent that Dunlop would win "the Tiger's red whiskers grew redder for joy." Evidently the people in the Usborne area had voted for Dunlop, beginning the Exeter area's Tory traditions. The Huron District elected Tory William Cayley in 1844 and 1853. In 1851 Reformer Malcolm Cameron defeated Cayley. In 1857 John Holmes, a Reform candidate, won over Cayley. In 1861 James Dickson defeated Cayley and Dickson represented the District until Confederation.

Since Confederation, Exeter has been located in four different federal ridings. From 1867 to 1882 Exeter was in the Huron South riding; from 1882 to 1904 the Village, along with neighbouring Stephen Township, formed part of the Middlesex North riding. After this Exeter was again part of Huron South until 1940. In 1940 the Huron-Perth riding was created and Exeter formed part of this riding until 1953. In that year the present Huron constituency was formed. In all of these constituencies, regardless of who the candidates were, Exeter voted solidly Conservative. Through wars

rebellions, depressions and prosperity Exeter stood firm.

Throughout "Upper Canada" politics played a major part in giving the rural and small town areas a periodic sense of excitement. Politics has been regarded somewhat ambivalently by us "Upper Canadians". On the one hand it was taken very seriously as witnessed by the degree of corruption, bribery and shady election practices which would appall us today. The serious view of politics may also be noted in the fact that we prayed, and indeed, still do for our political leaders. The Book of Common Prayer has many prayers "for those placed in authority over us"; we ask for guidance and direction "to elect fit persons to serve" in political office. There is a story, probably apocryphal, about a Methodist prayer meeting in Exeter in 1870 or 1871 during the Riel trouble in Manitoba. The prayer leader referred to these troubles saying "Oh Lord, if the government is to blame, remove it". At this, an old Grit called out "there is no if about it, Lord; Thou knowest well enough it is to blame". With this utterance all of the Tories present groaned and the Grits all said Amen!

But at the same time that serious concern was given to the men who were to be elected and close attention paid to legislation, Upper Canadians also viewed politics and elections as occasions for fun and amusement. People in the rural areas and small towns had an opportunity, in the early days at least, to see famous politicians, including Prime Ministers and the great political orators. These face-to-face meetings, discussions, and personal confrontations gave the voters a feeling of close involvement and participation. Today news and politics has been cut down into a commodity by the mass media, a staccato piece of show business. In the past certainly in the small towns of Ontario the local member was widely known and many people had personally seen and quite possibly talked with the Prime Minister. Exeter's citizens, for example, had a fairly extended visit from Alexander Mackenzie, Canada's second Prime Minister. Mackenzie stayed in the Gidley home during his visit in Exeter. (This house, incidentally is now the Douglas Gould residence on William Street.) Sir Charles Tupper, who was Prime Minister for a brief period in 1896 stopped in Exeter for half a day. Mackenzie King visited here several times. Sir Wilfred Laurier, R. B. Bennett, Louis St. Laurent, Lester Pearson, John Diefenbaker all visited in Exeter for brief periods. All of them were not, however, Prime Ministers at the time of their visits; Mackenzie King, for example, was Minister of Labor, Leader of the Opposition, and Prime Minister when he visited Exeter; during his visits he stayed with Major Heaman and later in the same house when it was owned by Albert Traquair. (This house is now owned by Kenneth Johns.) These comments are made merely to illustrate the personal nature of small town Ontario's politics.

The following section of Exeter's history, then, provides some details of Exeter's political history as related to the Dominion or federal politics. The chart below shows the various candidates and provides other information in summary form.

Election year	Riding in which Exeter located	Candidates	Winning Candidate	Party forming Government	Exeter's member in opposition or on Government side
1867	Huron South	M.C Cameron(L) J Ritchie(C) Sills(?)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1872	Huron South	M.C.Cameron(L) T.Greenway(C)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1874	Huron South	M.C.Cameron(L) T.Greenway(C)	Cameron	Liberal	Government
1875	Huron South	T Greenway(?)	Greenway	Liberal	Independent
1878	Huron South	M.C.Cameron(L) [illegible] Porter(C)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1882	North Middlesex	T Coughlin(C) L E.Shipley(L)	Coughlin	Conservative	Government
1887	North Middlesex	T.Coughlin(C) L E Shipley(L)	Coughlin	Conservative	Government
1891	North Middlesex	Hutchins(C) Taylor(L)	Hutchins	Conservative	Government
1896	North Middlesex	Hutchins(C) V Ratz(L)	Hutchins	Liberal	Opposition
1900	North Middlesex	J.Sherritt(C) V Ratz(L)	Sherritt	Liberal	Opposition
1904	Huron South	B.B.Gunn(C) T Fraser(L)	Gunn	Liberal	Opposition
1908	Huron South (by-election)	M Y McLean(L) H.Horton(C)	McLean	Liberal	Government
908	Huron South	M T McLean(L) J Sherritt(C)	McLean	Liberal	Government
1911	Huron South	M T McLean(L) J J Merner(C)	Merner	Conservative	Government
1917	Huron South	J J Merner(C) T McMillan(L)	Merner	Conservative (war coalition)	Government
1921	Huron South	Black(P) T.McMillan(L) J.J Merner(C)	Black	Liberal	Opposition
1925	Huron South	T McMillan(L) [illegible] McMillan(P) J.J Merner(C)	McMillan	Liberal	Government
1926	Huron South	T McMillan(L) A Hicks(C)	McMillan	Liberal	Government
1930	Huron South	T McMillan(L) N Trewartha(C)	McMillan	Conservative	Opposition
1932	Huron South (by-election)	W Golding(L) L Rader(C)	Golding	Conservative	Opposition

1935	Huron Perth	Donnelly(C) W.Golding(L) E McMillan	Golding	Liberal	Government
1940	Huron Perth	W.Golding(L) J Morley(C)	Golding	Liberal	Government
1945	Huron Perth	W Golding(L) T.Pryde(C) G Cann(CCF)	Golding	Liberal	Government
1949	Huron Perth	A Y McLean(L) E McKinley(C) J R Peters(CCF)	McLean	Liberal	Government
1953	Huron	A Y McLean(L) E.Cardiff(C)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1957	Huron	A Y McLean(L) E.Cardiff(C)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1958	Huron	E.Cardiff(C) W Cochrane(L)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1962	Huron	E.Cardiff(C) E Fisher(L) C.Hemingway(CCF) E.Douglas(SC)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1963	Huron	E.Cardiff(C) G.McGavin(L)	Cardiff	Liberal	Opposition
1965	Huron	R E.McKinley(C) M Edgar(L)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition
1968	Huron	R.E.McKinley(C) M Edgar(L)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition
1972	Huron	R E.McKinley(C) C Thomas(L) S Weary(NDP) E Baun(I)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition

As can be seen from the table the politics of South Huron were dominated during the period from Confederation to the 1880's by a gentleman who liked to style himself as "Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq Q C Cameron was a Reformer, i.e. a Liberal and Exeter was represented by him in Ottawa from 1867 to 1882 except for the period 1875 1878 when Thomas Greenway represented the area

In 1867 Cameron defeated the Conservative candidate Ritchie Sir John A MacDonald's government gerrymandered Huron in 1871 hoping to secure Conservative victories in at least two of the three ridings created in Huron The gerrymander drew heavy criticism in the House with Mr Rymal of Wentworth using most picturesque language as he attacked the government The gerrymander did not bother Cameron since he won again in the 1872 election and again in 1874 The Tories lost the 1874 "Pacific Scandal" election and Exeter was represented for the first time on the government side of the House There was to be trouble, however over the 1874 election local Tories protested Cameron's victory

This period, in the 1870's was one of confusing and sometimes violent political activity in South Huron Because of the confusion the period is one of the most interesting in the history of federal politics in South Huron; consequently it will be dealt with more fully than some of the other periods.

Alexander Mackenzie, then Prime Minister, called an election in 1874. The South Huron Tories moved to make plans. Exeter men such as Benjamin Valeck Elliott and Isaac Carling were important figures in the local Conservative organization. These men with their fellow Tories met in Dixon's Hotel in Brucefield on the 9th of January, 1874 to discuss the coming election. Elliott and Carling were very critical of Mackenzie for calling the election and putting the country to such "unnecessary expense." Nevertheless, they were hopeful of a Conservative victory in South Huron. The general feeling was that Cameron could be beaten. "It was a well known fact that Mr. Cameron had lost a good deal of his influence" because of his "debauchery of the people" at the previous election. The 'Times' of Exeter said that Cameron had been elected in 1872 "by the grossest acts of corruption and by the most outrageous violation of law and the constitution." The good editor of the 'Times' went on to speak so strongly as to suggest that Cameron had "polluted and dragged through the very depths of corruption" the South Huron constituency. He used means "at once most foul and disreputable." These comments from the 'Times' represented the feeling of the Exeter and South Huron Tories and with much hope they nominated Thomas Greenway to contest the election against Cameron. A short time after the Brucefield meeting the Conservative planners met in Exeter's old Union Hotel to organize the campaign. The 'Times' remarked that the political morality of the Government was so low that only the return of Sir John would solve the country's ills. The Reform Party was "impure and corrupt."

The strong Conservative campaign failed to unseat the seemingly unbeatable Cameron. The 'Times' moaned "O wretched hour that finds me thus!" not only had South Huron elected a Liberal but the country had returned Mackenzie's Liberal government. But, harkened the 'Times,' "take heart," there was hope Cameron's election would be protested. Cameron had spent "money in unlimited quantities," his agents "had scattered money and whiskey throughout the riding." "Proof of corruption was overwhelming." Not only had money and whiskey poured forth but a "gang of roughs from London" had been hired by Cameron to intimidate the voters. Such accusations as the above filled the pages of the Exeter Times, which also charged that Mr. Gibbons, the Returning Officer, had campaigned against Greenway. So the Tories launched a protest against Cameron who proceeded with attempts to protect himself on all sides. He presented a bill to redivide Huron, in his favour of course, by moving various polls and townships from one Huron riding to the other. The Senate suppressed the bill and thereby suppressed "the dangerous principle of allowing any member of the Commons whose return has been petitioned against to make a riding to suit himself."

Cameron was also suspected of suggesting to some Bayfield Conservatives that they work on the possibility of getting the Conservatives of South Huron to withdraw the protest against his election. Cameron is supposed to have promised to increase the government grant to Bayfield Harbour from $30,000 to $60,000. The Goderich Signal and the Seaforth paper denied that Cameron did anything wrong but the Exeter Times said "Cameron sinks lower."

The protest continued despite efforts to have it withdrawn and Cameron was brought to trial before an election court; he was found guilty of unlawful expenditures of funds. He escaped personal disqualification, but he was, nevertheless, unseated and a new election was called for early 1875. The Times was naturally ecstatic. The editor of Exeter's weekly suggested that "the trial so convinced the people of Cameron's duplicity ... that they delight in elevating their noses when they hear him approach, scenting him from afar. ... Many who voted for him have so felt the anguish of conscience at having assisted in his election that they express themselves as willing and anxious to work against him in the future." The Times also said that the price paid for a vote by Cameron's boys was a hat $8.00 or a jug of whiskey and referred to them as the "united bribers of South Huron" meeting in "solemn conclave before the bar." Incidentally it was during this protested election of 1874 that Exeter enjoyed its first visit from a Prime Minister. Alexander Mackenzie "the dour Scot" came to South Huron to help Cameron. The Times spoke of Mackenzie's speeches in Exeter as having "distorted the truth till there was no knowing it." Mackenzie stayed with the Gidley's on William Street.

After the election trial Cameron dropped out of sight for a time; he evidently went south for some sunshine and while he was gone interesting events followed. In February 1875 the nomination meeting for the South Huron by-election was held in Varna. Varna at this time was a small corner community with two general stores, a shoemaker, a blacksmith, a wagon maker, a tavern, two churches, and an Orange Hall. Varna was a favourite spot for the political campaigners in the 1870's. Sir John Willison in his Reminiscences describes a political meeting at Varna in 1872. Willison, when he was only fourteen, had walked from his house in Hillsgreen and came upon Greenway and Cameron in political debate.

> a group of men sat upon the platform, and in front and around were a crowd of people with eyes fixed upon a man who was speaking. I knew at once that it was not a camp-meeting for there was no suggestion of the fervour and solemnity which distinguished such events. There was occasional laughter and cheering, but I thought that some of those who listened did not like the behaviour of their neighbours. Finally the speaker sat down to much clapping and cheering. Another man arose, and there was even more cheering. As he spoke it was remarkable how he agreed with nothing that the first speaker had said while those who had been silent now became happy and demonstrative. But the light was breaking, and almost instinctively I knew what game they were playing.

So the game went on and at the 1875 nomination meeting the Conservatives again nominated Greenway. The Grits did not put up a candidate, consequently Greenway became South Huron's Member by acclamation. The Times was sure as were other Conservatives that Thomas Greenway was a good Tory. But the Toronto papers said that a deal had been made between Greenway and the Liberal government of Mackenzie. Willison, in his Reminiscences, suggests that in fact, there was an agreement before he was returned by acclamation that he would support the Administration of Alexander Mackenzie. Greenway however announced that he was going to Ottawa as an Independent. The Mitchell paper said that he was "a traitor." The Toronto Mail referred to "the traitor Greenway" and called him the "chattel" of Mackenzie's government. It appears quite definite that the people of Huron thought he was going to Ottawa as a Conservative intending to support Sir John A. MacDonald and the Opposition. If he had not so intended and had in fact made an arrangement with Mackenzie then he was certainly guilty of a politically dishonest and personally selfish manoeuvre. He had accepted the nomination as a Conservative and said nothing to indicate that he was undergoing a change of political persuasion.

Later on Greenway did make statements in which he expressed a desire to come to the House divested of all purely party principles. It was too late to cover up by then and the Times along with most other solid Tories in Huron became extremely critical of Greenway and remained critical of him throughout his term of office as Huron South's Member of Parliament. Many never forgave him for his duplicity.

It may be interesting to depart from the stream of Huron politics at this point to provide a brief comment on Thomas Greenway since he did play a rather prominent role in Canadian history although his important political contributions did not materialize until he had left Huron. He ultimately became Premier

of Manitoba and was in that office during the school crisis in Manitoba.

Greenway had been born in Cornwall on March 25, 1838, his father's name was Thomas and his mother was Elizabeth Heard. The family had probably come from Tiverton in Devonshire originally. In 1844 when young Thomas was six, the family emigrated to Canada, settling first near Bowmanville and moving to Huron in 1849. The senior Greenway died in 1850 and Mrs. Greenway and young Tom finished the log cabin themselves. Tom was only twelve but he left school then and took a job in London. He walked home to Centralia every Saturday night. In 1859 when he was twenty-one he went into the general merchandising business and opened his store in Centralia. He prospered in business and married Anne Hicks, she died of smallpox in 1875. At that time Greenway lived at Devon in the house later occupied by Mr. Wickwire, this house was torn down about 1961. It was located south of the garage presently located at Devon Corners. One of Greenway's sisters married Dr. J. A. Rollins who practiced in Exeter for some time.

Greenway was Reeve of Stephen for ten years, until 1875 the year he entered the Commons. It is reported that the little settlement of Greenway was so named at this time in honor of Thomas. It is obviously not part of our story to recount Greenway's Manitoba political career. It is sufficient to note that Greenway migrated to Manitoba in 1878 and pioneered in the Crystal City area. A number of Exeter area and other Huron people also migrated to this same area of Manitoba. He entered Manitoba politics in 1879 as a Liberal for the Mountain riding. He became Premier in 1888 and continued in that office until 1900. During this time the controversial separate school issue ensued. He served later on in the Dominion House as the member for Lisgar. In 1908 he was appointed to the Dominion Railway Commission. He died on October 31, 1908. Fred Landon reported that Greenway seldom, if ever, spoke in the Federal House. He had, then, a long political career. Some historians have suggested that he never rose to anything more than a kind of astute mediocrity. He is, nevertheless, one of the more prominent politicians to emerge from the immediate Exeter area.

All of this could be expanded upon, we should, however return to our main story. Greenway took his seat in the House in 1875 and represented Huron South until 1878. An election was called in 1878 and the preliminary events in Huron prior to that election are rather puzzling. In 1877 the Times noted that since Greenway had "gone over to the enemy" he would certainly not be considered as the Tory candidate in the next election, he had revealed himself as a full fledged reformer "a turncoat" and "unworthy of support". As a chattel of the reform party he was "lame and impotent".

The Conservatives came up with a Mr. Robert Porter and the Grits chose "the Benedict Arnold of South Huron", Thomas Greenway, as their standard bearer. Beneath the item noting Greenway's nomination the Times had a skull and crossbones captioned "Memento Mori". Shortly after these nominations some unusual political procedures transpired. Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq., Q.C., emerged from his south land vacation and somehow he secured the Liberal nomination which had been bestowed on Thomas Greenway. Shortly after Greenway had given up the nomination he went west to Manitoba. What actually happened can only be surmised. Perhaps the Grits felt that Porter would defeat Greenway because of Greenway's widespread unpopularity. Sudden political transformations (or defections depending on how one looks at them) are often very unpopular and local Liberals may have felt that the old Cameron magic was needed to defeat Porter. Perhaps some deal was made by Greenway for some favors in the West in order to make way for Cameron's return. It is beyond our scope to follow these lines of thought. In brief, Cameron replaced Greenway as the Liberal candidate. The Times said "that Cameron had swallowed Greenway's vomit" and was going to try to save South Huron for the Grits.

With Porter campaigning vigorously for the Tories and Cameron working in his usual effective manner, the 1878 election in Huron South was a hot affair. The Exeter Times, the most partisan Tory paper in South Huron, was naturally strongly in favor of Robert Porter as was the village of Exeter. Exeter gave Porter 207 votes and Cameron 92. The Times wanted Sir John A. back to dispose of the "effete party" and to end "the days of foetid corruption, wanton extravagance, and glaring scandals". Exeter had several good meetings, Cameron and Porter spoke in the famed Francistown hostelry, the Walper Hotel, on September 4, 1878. The Times praised the "transcendent abilities" of Porter. Isaac Carling, R. Pickard, Wharton Hodgson, V. B. Elliott, prominent Exeter citizens are mentioned as being present to support Robert Porter.

Throughout the campaign the Times kept up a steady attack on the Cameron party. The paper referred to the "many men of the Reform Party of South Huron" who ran after Cameron as vultures: "they cannot withstand the smell of carrion, they have a hankering after the fleshpots of Egypt". In order to be fair to the Times it should be pointed out that its pages contained not only invective but also intelligent comment on the issues of the day. The chief issues of the 1878 election were Free Trade as opposed to

MacDonald's National Policy, railways, Mackenzie's inept government and of course government over spending. Exeter businessmen and the Times were believers in the protection of MacDonald's National Policy; they were opposed to Free Trade and "Reciprocity with our Yankee neighbours".

The Times reported the speeches of the two candidates although Mr. Porter's speeches were reported much more fairly than Mr. Cameron's. Mr. Cameron was "wearisome, stale, and platitudinous" whereas Mr. Porter was "masterly, logical and convincing". There were meetings held all over the riding and they were well attended and well reported in all of the riding's weekly papers; the reports were naturally slanted by the political persuasion of the editors. Mr. Cameron was bitterly critical of the Exeter Times; he charged it with being a "dirty, miserable Tory sheet" and observed how "shameful" its lies were. At Limerick (Mt. Carmel) Cameron's speech contained "the usual abuse of the Exeter Times". It is difficult to blame Cameron for attacking the Times. After all if a paper said such things as "Cameron the egotistical individual ... who would give his right arm and wade through filth and rottenness and falsehood to the teeth to represent South Huron", there was bound to be retaliation.

The campaign progressed with the candidates meeting each other in halls throughout the riding. Drew's Hall in Exeter was the scene of a major meeting with Isaac Carling in the Chair. Dr. Rollins chaired a meeting in Crediton with 1000 people present. Elimville, Grand Bend, Clinton, in fact, most places in the riding had an opportunity to see the candidates. The postal service was an important local issue; the postal service was described as being provided by a "milk wagon with a broken winded horse".

The 1878 campaign saw rancour, vilification, and abuse heaped upon each other by the Grits and the Tories. After the vote the Times rejoiced "A fatal day for the Grits". Sir John and his Conservative Party carried the country but there was a dampening note; the local Conservative candidate Porter was defeated by the seemingly unbeatable Cameron. The Times deplored Cameron's win and said that it had been accomplished "by means the most foul and contemptible, by acts which degrade the constituency and cover the so-called Reform Party with an odor of infamy and deepest shame. Acts of the blackest corruption were resorted to in every quarter of the riding by the unscrupulous hireling agents of one of the most notorious corruptionists in the Dominion. Nothing that low mean trickery could devise was left undone to secure that man Cameron's return. Such a humiliating event as the election of Cameron could only have been secured by bribery".

Consequent upon the widespread charges of corruption the

local Tories launched the usual protest against Cameron's election. The charge as usual against Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq. Q.C. was "bribery of the most scandalous and widespread kind". The Tories pressed the charge but Cameron was not found guilty this time. Cameron continued to be the dominant political figure in Huron for the next several elections; for example, he defeated Robert Porter in West Huron in 1882 again "by means most foul and contemptible". The Times also noted that "the blackest corruption was reported in every quarter of the riding". It should be remembered in all of this that all parties practised forms of bribery and staged open displays of fairly rough methods of persuasion. On voting day in Huron and elsewhere, both parties gave free drinks of whiskey and beer. There was lots of fighting as both candidates had supporters at the polling places to rough up a few supporters of the opposition. "Johnny-runabouts" hung around the polling places for the free drinks and without secret ballots everybody knew how everyone else voted and confusion, beatings and bribery were the orders of the day.

Cameron was not, however, directly involved in Exeter's political history after 1882 since Exeter, along with Stephen Township was gerrymandered into the North Middlesex Riding by the Conservative government. This was done prior to the 1882 election in an effort to bolster the Tory vote in North Middlesex. The riding was held by Timothy Coughlin, an Irish Catholic Conservative who had been elected for the first time in 1878; he won the seat again in 1882 and 1887. The Times had supported Coughlin in 1878 when the Parkhill Gazette attacked poor Timothy most rudely. The Gazette said that Tim was "a slovenly farmer ... If one wants to see barn doors on one hinge, cattle and pigs in the garden and orchard, fences dilapidated" and many other agricultural sins, the Gazette said Tim Coughlin's farm filled the bill. The Exeter editor sprang to Coughlin's defence by suggesting that the Gazette editor was a preposterous liar: "there was not", said the Times "a better managed farm in the county".

The Parkhill Gazette was not overjoyed with the strengthening of North Middlesex for Tory election purposes and began in 1882 a campaign to suggest that the Orangemen among the Tories wanted to throw the Catholic Coughlin out. The Times observed that it was more dirty Reform Party work. The wicked Grits were trying to split the Catholic vote against Coughlin. It did not work, however, and the Times regarded Coughlin's win as a victory not only for good government but also a victory over the Grit's efforts at trying to prejudice the minds of the electors by introducing religion as a local issue. Exeter gave Coughlin solid majorities in both 1882 and 1887.

In 1891 Exeter again supported the Conservative candidate giving that party's candidate, Hutchins 255 votes out of a total of 363. Over all Hutchin's majority was only 2 (later increased to 6 on the recount). The Times had told the people to choose between the Conservative party which pledged loyalty to Britain, Protection and Prosperity and the "Yankee Grit" party alternatives of Free Trade, Annexation and Ruin.

Shortly after the 1891 general election the "Old Man" died. The Times columns were bordered in black and the Times expressed the sorrow that all of Canada felt when Sir John A. MacDonald died. In its columns the Times noted that Sir John's lesson to everyone was "faithful performance of duty to our country".

Exeter remained in North Middlesex until 1904 being represented by W. H. Hutchins who squeaked in again in 1896 with a majority of 11. Exeter was visited by the Prime Minister on June 18, 1896. Sir Charles Tupper arrived in town accompanied by Sir John Carling, Isaac's brother, and other dignitaries. The party was greeted with "unbounded enthusiasm". The largest crowd in the history of the village was reported to be on the streets. When Tupper appeared on the station platform, "cheers followed, hats went up in the air, handkerchiefs waved in all directions. . . For some time Sir Charles was kept bowing in response to the plaudits of the populace". A procession to the Driving Park "was made up of a large number of carriages, two bands, thousands of people on foot, and some militia men under Captain Howard and Thomas Prior." Locally prominent Conservatives such as Dr. Rollins, L. H. Dickson, Lancelot Hardy, R. S. O'Neill, D. Mills, Miller White, C. H. Sanders, were in the lead carriages. The Council, Reeve Bawden, Deputy Reeve T. B. Carling, and Councillors Taylor, Snell and Treble were also in the carriages with Sir Charles, Sir John Carling, Dr. Montague, and W. H. Hutchins. Sir Charles delivered a speech to a large crowd in the Driving Park. John Sherritt held the North Middlesex Riding for the Tories from 1900 to 1904.

In 1904 Exeter was returned to the Huron South Riding, as were the townships of Usborne and Stephen. A man with the metaphorical name of B. B. Gunn, a Seaforth merchant bore the Tory standard against the Liberal T. Fraser. During the 1904 election Exeter had a brief visit from Sir Wilfred Laurier who gave a five minute speech at the railway station, Laurier was on his way to Lucknow to deliver a campaign speech. Gunn won Huron South but Laurier's Liberals won the country.

In 1908 M. Y. McLean of Seaforth won two elections, a by-election and the general election. Exeter gave the Tory candidates, Horton and Sherritt substantial majorities.

In 1911 McLean was defeated by 114 votes. The winner was J.

J. Merner of Zurich who brought South Huron back into the Tory fold. The country also went Conservative as Laurier and his Liberals were defeated on the great issue of the day, Reciprocity. Exeter's two newspapers the Times and the Advocate engaged in a debate on Reciprocity. The Advocate was a vehement supporter of the Conservative position and opposed Reciprocity. The Times, which was an unquestioning supporter of the Conservative party during its first thirty years of existence had become a somewhat moderate supporter of Liberalism and of Laurier and King. This change in the Times' politics was a result of the rise to prominence on the paper of young J. M. Southcott whose political views differed markedly from those of the Whites whose true blue Conservatism had been reflected in the pages of the Times.

During the 1911 election campaign Exeter had its first visit from William Lyon Mackenzie King. He and M. Y. McLean spoke in the James Street Church shed on August 23. King was Laurier's Minister of Labor but the Advocate reported that "he scarcely measures up to the reputation accorded him by the Government papers. He is fluent but not accurate, ready, but not convincing." The Advocate went on to suggest that King's "methods suggest the work of the unscrupulous promoter who tries to befuddle rather than enlighten, to perplex rather than instruct." He "put up a big bluff" said the Advocate, "but in doing so he reckoned without regard to the intelligence of his audience whose lack of enthusiasm must have been depressing." The Times was not critical of King and the Advocate took the Times to task for its "slavish adherence to the dictation of the government." The Advocate in one of the fairly rare exchanges between the two papers, said that the "Times had thrown off its hypocritical mask and come out in its true colors"; in other words the Advocate charged the Times with now being a Liberal paper. As we mentioned above old John White had been an unchangeable Tory but J. M. Southcott was a Liberal and over the years he gave moderate support to the Liberals, although he supported Conservatives as well, depending on the existing conditions. The Advocate, however, remained staunchly Tory until its amalgamation with the Times in the 1920's.

J. J. Merner attacked Reciprocity at a large rally held in the Opera House. Merner suggested that the horse trade would suffer with Reciprocity, and Exeter which was still a fairly important center for the horse trade was impressed with Merner's speech. The Farmers' Bank was also attacked at this meeting as being a fraud. Many in South Huron had apparently "been fleeced by the bunch of thieves" which operated the Bank. Many lost money when the bank experienced financial difficulty. It is also worth noting that the Exeter salt industry made a strong case against Reciprocity as

well. So after the 1911 campaign was over Jonathan Joseph Merner was the winner; he represented South Huron until 1921.

In 1917 Merner was elected as the Conservative-Unionist candidate, or as the Tories termed it the "win-the-war candidate". Thomas McMillan from Tuckersmith was the Laurier Liberal candidate. The war and conscription were the great issues and South Huron was rather sharply split. There were, for example, certain elements in Stephen and Hay that voted heavily against the Conservative-Unionist government of Borden. The close division is reflected in Merner's very small majority of only 47 votes. In a larger study of this election in South Huron it would be possible to examine rural Western Ontario's attitude toward Conscription; rural Western Ontario was not pro-Conscription. Indeed J. J. Merner who had voted for conscription in the House was told all over the riding that he would not have supported Conscription if he "had a boy". Exeter, with its very English background responded to the call of the government and gave Merner overwhelming support, 320 votes to 120. On the other hand, Hay Township gave McMillan an even greater majority. The Advocate probably spoke for Exeter:

> "If you are in favor of sending reinforcements to the front to help the brave boys who are there, you will vote for Merner. If you are not you will vote the other way. . . . The issue is plain, simple, free and above board. How any red-blooded British subject can find any difficulty in making a choice is beyond comprehension."

Before leaving the 1917 election, it should be noted that in 1917 petitions were being circulated in Exeter calling for universal women's suffrage. Only women directly and closely related to servicemen could vote and evidently some women in Exeter were urging that this be extended to all females.

In the first election after the Great War, Exeter and South Huron voters were given their first three-man slate to choose from. The three candidates were J. J. Merner, Tom McMillan and William Black. Black, the Progressive, won the riding with a majority of only 44 over McMillan and 140 over Merner. Black went to Ottawa to join 64 other Progressives. Exeter remained loyal to the Tory, Merner giving him a solid majority. Black owed his win to three townships: Usborne, Hay and Stephen.

The major story as far as Exeter was concerned in the 1925 election was the visit of Canada's Prime Minister, Mackenzie King who made his second visit to Exeter. He came in support of Thomas McMillan. Thousands of people were in the village on Labor Day 1925 to see and hear King. The town was "gaily decorated" with flags and streamers strung across the streets. Mackenzie King arrived on the morning train, and a parade led by the Zurich Band and Frank Taylor on a white horse escorted the Prime Minister to the steps of the library where Reeve W. D. Sanders read an "address of welcome". Mr. King responded with a speech "entirely void of politics". The Prime Minister was introduced to Mrs. Gidley and Mrs. Christie who had entertained Alexander Mackenzie fifty years before when that Liberal Prime Minister visited Exeter. The Reeve's address of welcome to King was most dignified and included "the freedom of the village". The Prime Minister enjoyed lunch at the house of Major Heaman.

In the afternoon five thousand people gathered in Victoria Park to hear King and other dignitaries speak. Two little girls, Jeanette Taman and Jean Stanbury presented King with a bouquet of roses from the garden of William Ward. Gladioli from the garden of J. S. Harvey "adorned the platform". If King's speech had been non-political in the morning it was certainly political enough in the afternoon; he vigorously attacked Meighen and the Conservatives. He told the people to return the Liberals to power for their own good. J. C. Elliott of London, McMillan, Senator McCoig and others spoke. The arrangements for the day had been made by some of Exeter's prominent Liberals — Dick Seldon, Major Heaman, J. G. Stanbury, J. Jeckell, E. J. Christie. The loan automobiles used by King and his party were Chryslers loaned by C. C. Pilon. The great rally may have helped McMillan win South Huron, but the people of Exeter, while enjoying the day and its festivities went to the polls and cast a solid majority for J. J. Merner.

The 1926 election came when King lost the confidence of the House and Tom McMillan won again, defeating Andrew Hicks the former UFO member in the Ontario House. Exeter stood firm, however, and gave the Conservative Hicks a large majority.

In 1930 R. B. Bennett came to Exeter; he was leader of the opposition but did go on to become Prime Minister. The people of Exeter then had another opportunity to visit with the man who would become their next Premier. He was in Exeter on July 23 in support of Nelson W. Trewartha. Exeter was again gaily decorated. The Dashwood Band and the Clinton Kiltie Band led a procession of cars to Victoria Park where "several thousand persons were present to hear the speeches". Catherine Armstrong and Britton Sanders presented flowers to Miss Bennett and Mrs. Trewartha. Reeve B. M. Francis welcomed Mr. Bennett who gave a major speech referring to all of the problems of the day. His visit to Huron was not enough, however, to unseat the popular McMillan who defeated Trewartha 6176 to 5827.

Tom McMillan unfortunately died two years later in the

summer of 1932; his death was the result of being "crushed against the side of a stall by a colt" on his farm in McKillop Township. He was a popular member. The ensuing by-election saw a strong campaign in South Huron since both the Liberals and the Conservatives considered the election an important indicator election. Both parties sent important political figures to Exeter to support the candidates. The Liberal candidate was William H. Golding and the Conservative was Louis Rader. Both men were nominated on September 26 in Hensall. The main Street of Hensall was jammed and the candidates spoke from a truck as the crowd stood in a drizzling rain to hear the issues discussed. Mr. Rader said he was a farmer; the riding needed a farmer in Ottawa, therefore he should be elected — Mr. Golding spoke on the Bennett government's failure to end the depression and criticized the Tories for making the recent Imperial Economic Conference an issue in the by-election. Golding had been mayor of Seaforth for nine years.

Mackenzie King made his third visit to Exeter and spoke at a rally in the rink. Once again Main Street was decorated, the Zurich Band provided music and between 2000 and 3000 people gave King a "great ovation as he entered the building". Dr. W. F. Beavers chaired the meeting. Both King and Golding strongly criticized the government. The Times was favourably inclined toward Golding suggesting that he appeared to be "well informed". Mr. King stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Albert Traquair on this occasion.

The Conservatives also had their eyes on the riding and the Opera House was filled to capacity to hear the Hon. R. J. Manion, Minister of Railways and Canals. Louis Rader also spoke telling of his twelve years in municipal work which included the wardenship of Huron County. The result of the heavy campaigning saw Golding elected by a 2000 vote majority. Exeter stuck to its Tory tradition and gave Rader a majority but Golding's majority was the largest ever recorded in the riding up to that time. This, of course, marked the beginning of a long political career for Golding which eventually took him to the Senate.

In 1935 Golding recorded an even larger majority over Frank Donnelly and R. J. MacMillan, the Stevens Reconstruction Party candidate. While Exeter voted Tory, Golding polled the largest percentage of votes a Liberal had ever polled in Exeter. Donnelly secured only a 59 vote majority in Exeter out of 707 votes cast. Exeter was in the Huron-Perth riding for this election. By 1940 Golding was considered almost unbeatable and James Morley, a young Exeter lawyer was almost a sacrificial candidate for the Conservatives. Tom Pryde placed Morley's name in nomination. Golding had no trouble in securing a large majority over the riding but Exeter gave Morley a large majority.

Tom Pryde made his first foray into the election battles in 1945. He appealed to the voters as Flt. Lt. Thomas Pryde, a veteran of two wars and a Conservative. He said, "the Liberal government is unworthy to represent the people of Canada" and appealed to the voters of Huron to help remove the government of King. John Bracken, the Tory leader, came to Exeter and spoke at a rally in the arena. Two hundred students from the high school were present to hear Bracken's speech. Also in this election the voters of Exeter had their first opportunity to vote for a C.C.F. candidate; Mr. G. A. Cann of Exeter stood as that party's representative. While Pryde's strong and worthy campaign reduced Mr. Golding's majority to 466, he was not able to unseat the popular Seaforth member. This was Golding's last election.

In 1949 Mr. Golding did not seek re-election; he had served for seventeen years in the House. He had been Deputy-Chairman of the whole House and as a result of his service to the country and his party he was rewarded with a seat in the Senate. He gave excellent service in the Senate, serving on various committees including the important Divorce committee; he had one of the best attendance records in the Senate. When he died in December 1961 he had served continuously in public life for forty five years as municipal councillor, mayor, Member of Parliament and Senator. As the Times-Advocate expressed it, "he always gave his best."

The 1949 election was contested for the Liberals by another Seaforth native, A. Y. McLean. McLean's grandfather had been both a federal and provincial member. Elgin McKinley, whose son Robert was elected Huron member almost fifteen years later was the Conservative candidate. The C.C.F. contested the riding with Rev. John R. Peters standing for the socialist party. With Golding not in the running the Tories had some hope of "redeeming the riding." At the Conservative nomination meeting it is interesting to note that C. S. MacNaughton was nominated; he remarked as he declined "that Ottawa was full of bureaucrats, who spent money with reckless abandon."

During the 1949 campaign Exeter enjoyed another visit from a Prime Minister. This time, of course, it was the Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent. Mr. St. Laurent reached Exeter in the afternoon and proceeded to the front of the library where a large crowd had gathered. The London Police Boys Band, the staff and students of the high school led by June Walters and the Girls' Bugle Band, the "public school scholars and staff" and many townspeople were assembled. Ben Tuckey was the Chairman. Mr. St. Laurent was welcomed by Reeve A. J. Sweitzer. "The address of the Prime Minister could not be called a political speech, there was no platform oratory, but it was more of a friendly 'get acquainted' address." Premier Frost of Ontario also visited Exeter in 1949. Barbara Tuckey and Marilyn Hicks presented flowers to Mrs. St. Laurent.

The only suggestion of rancour in the Exeter area during this campaign appeared in the Times-Advocate as the editor and Mr. W. F. Oestreicher exchanged verbal barrages in the columns of the paper. Mr. Oestreicher talked of the Times-Advocate's "gross misrepresentation" and "scare propaganda which was directed against the C.C.F." The editor referred to some of the C.C.F.'s contentions as "sewage". The exchange, however, was mild when compared with the strong language of the 1870's and 1880's which appeared in the Times. When the vote was in, the Liberals had won the riding again as McLean polled a majority of 512 over McKinley. The C.C.F. polled only 558 votes to McLean's 7000. It goes without saying that Exeter voted Conservative again.

In 1953 Exeter became a part of the new riding of Huron; two incumbent members, Elston Cardiff and A. Y. McLean sought to be the Member for the new Huron constituency. Cardiff, the Tory from the old Huron North riding defeated McLean by less than 1000 votes; Exeter voted 783 to 499 for Cardiff. Thus for the first time in 36 years, Exeter and the south part of Huron were represented by a Conservative in Ottawa. During the 1953 campaign, John Diefenbaker was in Exeter where he accompanied Cardiff to the races. Lester Pearson also visited Exeter that year.

In 1957 Cardiff again defeated McLean by 3715 votes; in 1958 Cardiff defeated Exeter lawyer W. G. Cochrane. Cochrane maintained that "the dissolution of parliament was entirely uncalled for at this time" and he also attempted to relate the closing of the Exeter canning factory to the Diefenbaker government's policies which reduced exports. It was really no contest, however, since Cardiff was swept to victory by his own brand of electoral magic and, of course, by the "Diefenbaker deluge" which swept the largest majority in Canada's history into power. The vote in Huron was 14,108 to 7550 for Cardiff but "Bill Cochrane suffered no personal embarrassment in the results in Huron. While he was beaten by a record majority, it was still far less in proportion to others.... When an unknown farmer could defeat veteran campaigner Jimmy Gardiner ... the tide was beyond dyking." The Exeter Times-Advocate went on to suggest that the leadership cult which had started in Canada with St. Laurent and had culminated in Diefenbaker's huge majority was unhealthy and dangerous.

The Cardiff electoral magic continued to work in 1962 when he defeated three opponents: Ernest Fisher, Liberal, Carl Hemingway, N.D.P., and Earl Douglas, Social Credit. All failed to dent Cardiff's hold on Huron. During this election the Times-Advocate embarrassed itself when it reported that "few doubt, at this moment, that veteran L. E. Cardiff will be defeated". The T. A. later reported that it had intended to say "few doubt that he will be elected". In 1963 Cardiff defeated Liberal Gordon McGavin.

In 1965 and 1968 Robert E. McKinley defeated Liberal candidate Maitland Edgar to hold Huron for the Conservatives despite the country's swing back to the Liberals.

In federal politics then, Exeter has a one hundred percent record. In every election since Confederation, Exeter voted Conservative. The only really notable political figures associated with Exeter at the federal level were Thomas Greenway and Senator Golding. The other figures never did rise to a place of national prominence or fame. The brief review of federal politics in Exeter and area has shown how rough politics was in the period following Confederation to about 1900. Newspapers were almost libellous in their comments, and bribery, threats and rough tactics were common. As time went on the newspapers became more moderate and the number of bribery charges diminished in Huron. Some of the more personal elements in politics also disappeared. The large political rally that characterized the small town has all but gone. Personal visits of an extended nature to small towns by Prime Ministers are a thing of the past. The number of people who are hard line Tories or Grits has diminished to the point where the apolitical majority now controls the vote.

In the old days most local villagers and farmers knew the candidates and had talked with them. Now many people even in a rural riding do not know the candidates nor do they know the Member. In our age of electronic politics the political meeting is less efficient. Much of the color has gone from federal politics and people seem to be less involved than they were in the past. While Exeter still votes Tory the chances grow with each election that it may some day vote Grit as people become less and less partisan. If Exeter ever should vote any way but Tory, though, a small earthquake may occur in the old grave yard north of town as the old-time Tories roll over in their graves.

In provincial politics Exeter did vote Progressive twice but the rest of the time it remained Conservative. Exeter has been represented in the provincial House by only 12 Members since Confederation. These twelve were: R. Gibbons, Isaac Carling, Archibald Bishop, M. Y. McLean, Henry Eilber, Andrew Hicks, Nelson Trewartha, W. G. Medd, J. Ballantyne, Dr. Hobbs Taylor, Tom Pryde and C. S. MacNaughton. Six of these were Conservatives, four were Liberals, two were third party representatives viz. Medd a Progressive and Hicks a UFO member.

The first man elected to represent Huron South in the

Legislative Assembly of Ontario was Liberal Robert Gibbons; he won by 10 votes but his term was very short lived, however, since his Conservative opponent Isaac Carling petitioned for an inquiry into the election. The hearings regarding the election are recorded in the Journals of the Ontario Legislative Assembly and they reflect the loose political morality of the day. There were charges and counter charges of bribery and corruption and of irregular voting. The Hay Township voters' lists included some illegal votes for Gibbons.

The hearing was held before five appointees of the Attorney General's office and three of the five being Conservatives decided that Carling had a majority of the legally acceptable votes and was therefore entitled to be declared the duly elected Member for Huron South.

Carling and Gibbons fought the 1871 provincial election with Gibbons winning by 207 votes. Gibbons was appointed Sheriff in 1873 and the ensuing by-election resulted in the Liberal Archibald Bishop defeating Conservative George Case. Bishop was to hold the seat for the next 22 years. Bishop was from Usborne Township and had served on the Township Council since 1862. He held the Wardenship of the county in 1873 and 1874. Bishop was born in Edinborough, Scotland on September 6, 1829 and had come to Canada in 1849. He had settled in Usborne in 1854 and married Janet Doig in 1862. Bishop died in April 1901 after being stricken with paralysis while alone in his buggy.

For 22 years Archie Bishop was unbeatable. George Case tried again in 1875 and lost by 78 votes. The Bishop victory was due, according to the Times, to two factors. One of these factors was the Grit gerrymander of Goderich Township which saw 3 polls, No. 3, 4, and 6 only in South Huron. The other factor was "the indolence of the Tory voters in Stephen Township". The Conservatives failed to come out for Case feeling that the "gerrymander" had licked them anyway.[27]

G. E. Jackson took Bishop on in 1875, losing by 160 votes. The Times felt sure that Bishop would lose; the editor remarked that "Mr. Bishop, our talented representative will be like Grandfather's clock, stopped short, never to go again." In reporting one of Bishop's speeches the Times observed the following:

> "Mr. A. Bishop, South Huron's representative, in his wandering remarks said that he had only two years of schooling. ... If Mr. Bishop made these remarks for the information of the electors they were quite uncalled for as the fact that his education is limited is patent to everyone."[28]

The Times did not like Mr. Bishop's attitude toward education. The Times remarked that Bishop must have a poor opinion of the mental calibre of farmers in that Bishop opined that "a little readin', writin', and 'rithmetic is all a farmer's son requires". The Times noted that it was a matter of surprise that even Mr. Bishop would hold such anti-diluvian views on education.

Jackson was defeated again by Bishop in 1883. Exeter, as usual, followed the Times' views and voted Tory. The Times suggested that Mr. Bishop should "sink out of sight for his part in the sins of the Mowat government". In 1886 and 1890 Bishop easily defeated Tories Swenerton and Holmes.

In 1894, after 22 years, Bishop passed South Huron to M. Y. McLean who carried on the Liberal tradition. McLean secured majorities in only two municipalities, Seaforth and Tuckersmith, but these were so large that they were sufficient by 16 to overcome the Tory majorities elsewhere in the riding. When Bishop stepped down he commented in the Times on a party he had attended toward the end of his term. It seemed that Country Boy Bishop did not socialize much and he immortalized one of his few social gatherings in 1894 in a long poem which appeared in the Advocate in March, 1894. The poem was entitled "Borrowed Swallowtail" and a small sample of it is given below:

"One night the hospitable government
of [illegible]
Got up a fete to celebrate
South Huron's son's debut
The lavishness of wealth displayed
Would turn a Croesus pale
And best of all was Bishop
In his borrowed swallowtail."

In 1898 the long Liberal reign in South Huron was ended by Henry Eilber. This victory marked the beginning of another long term in South Huron. Eilber served the riding for 21 years. His father Jacob had come from Pennsylvania to Crediton and had established a general merchandise business and eventually became postmaster in Crediton. Eilber had been in municipal politics in Stephen as councillor, reeve, deputy reeve and clerk. He died in January, 1943 at the age of 86 having served in municipal affairs, in the provincial legislature and as secretary treasurer of the Hay Township Mutual Fire Insurance company for 53 years.

But to return to the 1898 election. It was a joyous occasion for the Times and for Exeter. The headline in the Times, beneath the ensign of Ontario, fairly shouted:

"Eilber is Bismarck
South Huron Redeemed
After 33 years."

As Leacock says in Sunshine Sketches, "Men who had voted, with pain and sorrow in their hearts, for the Liberal Party for twenty years, came out that evening and owned up straight that they were Conservatives". Eilber had not won easily. The Grits had attacked his character and his business ethics; circulars among the Catholics accused him of being a P.P.A. Even after he had won, McLean, the defeated Liberal candidate suggested that Eilber's victory was "a dishonourable and purchased victory". The Tory leader, James Pliny Whitney, had been in Exeter during the campaign and had addressed a mass meeting in the skating rink. 3000 people were present to hear the Exeter Brass Band play "patriotic airs" and to lead the procession from the hotel to the rink. "Hail to our Beloved Chief" was printed on a large banner over the platform from where Dr. Rollins chaired the meeting. Whitney attacked Sir Oliver Mowat's government with such charges as "that good man, Sir Oliver Mowat had ridden both the saloon and temperance horses; while making promises to the temperance people he had his hand in the pockets of the license holders — and it seldom came out empty".

Eilber spoke as "a humble German boy who graduated from a twenty foot log schoolhouse (applause)". But he said "he was going into the fight to win". Eilber did, indeed, win in 1902, 1905, 1908, 1911 and 1914. He was criticized by the Times in 1908 for having the riding gerrymandered. The Times said he went "crying to Whitney" to get Grit Seaforth out of South Huron and to add the other Tory polls of Goderich Township to the riding.

Eilber's opponent in 1911 and 1914 was Edmund Zellar. In 1914 a major Ontario issue was Temperance; Edmund Zellar's pledge to the people of South Huron was to "abolish the bar". He said a vote for Eilber was a vote for the bar and a vote for Zellar was a vote to "wipe out the curse". Zellar said 6000 men fill drunkards' graves in Canada each year. "These 6000 were once little boys with the fond hopes of their good mothers, yet the bar got them." Zellar even quoted Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany who claimed that "nerves are undermined and endangered by the use of alcohol".

In June 1914, N. W. Rowell, the Liberal and Temperance leader spoke at the rink in Exeter. A huge crowd gathered to hear Rowell pledge to "wipe out the bar in the Ontario Club, the Albany Club and every other club". He said the Conservatives had chosen to "stand by the bar" and that "the liquor forces were lined up behind them". But the "churches were on the Liberals' side". "Remember your young people" said Rowell, "don't let a good Huron boy become ensnared in a wicked, evil barroom". Prom-

nent Exeter Liberals such as Heaman and Stanbury arranged the meeting and "Master Douglas Stanbury, the boy soprano sang".

The Conservatives and Eilber, despite the strong attack by the Liberals and Zeller, and despite the "lying, slandering sneaks" that went up and down the riding "slandering" Mr. Eilber, still won the 1914 election. Soon after this election, the Premier, Mr. Whitney died.

In 1919, the long Eilber reign ended in South Huron. This was the year that the UFO swept into power and Eilber did not contest the seat. Some said that he saw the "writing on the wall" and stepped down before the election. Fred Ellerington made his only foray into politics and the Conservative standard bearer, he went down to defeat as did Liberal John T. Morgan. The winner was the UFO candidate, Andrew Hicks of Centralia. A number of prominent Exeter and area men supported the UFO cause at this time. W. D. Sanders, a UFO director, pointed out that "the big interests are manipulating things to keep the common people hewers of wood and drawers of water". He said, "there were too many officials, too many laws, and too many men getting something for nothing". R. B. Pickard felt that "we have too many millionaires running the country" and went on to suggest that if farmers did not secure more representation "the other fellow will see that the farmer will carry the big end of the load". S. J. Pym, Enos Hardmen, R. G. Seldon, John Essery, Joshua Johns and many other prominent men of the area supported the UFO movement. Andrew Hicks suggested that "the manufacturers are to Canada what the Kaiser was to Germany and only the farmers could stop them" from totally running the government and the country. He said "farmers have to stick together".

Some of the men who supported the UFO movement did not go so far as to support the party at the polls. Traditionally Liberal men like Pickard, Seldon, Essery and others probably voted Liberal while sympathizing with the farmers. Exeter remained Tory and gave Ellerington a very large majority. Usborne, Stephen and Hay gave substantial majorities to Hicks who won the riding by about 700 votes over Ellerington. Hicks became the UFO whip during his time in the House.

For some reason Hicks was dropped in 1923 by the UFO and the party chose W. G. Medd an Exeter creamery operator. "Considerable surprise was felt throughout the riding when it was known that Mr. Hicks had been dropped by the party". Hicks had evidently done a good job. Nelson Trewartha was the Tory candidate and he and George Henry held a well attended rally in the Opera House. D. F. MacGregor, the Liberal standard bearer criticized the UFO administration and the Conservative party "in the usual manner", remarked the Times with perhaps a trace of tedium. The Tories swept South Huron and the province.

W. G. Medd stood as the Progressive candidate in 1926 and 1929. In these two elections no Liberal contested the riding. The Tories were A. Neeb and G. Elliott. Medd won both elections and Exeter, for the only time in its history, voted against the Conservative candidates. In the 1929 election the returning officer Fred Ford of Clinton declared Elliott elected by a small majority, a celebration occurred in both Clinton and Seaforth. The Ontario dailies declared Elliott's election the next day. The Times-Advocate, however, reported as follows:

> "As we go to press this morning the results of the election in Huron are in doubt. After working until a late hour and with many long distance telephone calls, we place Mr. Medd's majority at ten. Mr. Ford the returning officer at Clinton gives Mr. Elliott a small majority."

The Times-Advocate proved to be right and the official figures declared Medd elected by 26. This must be one of the rare occasions when a small town weekly scooped the big dailies. W. C. Pearce was Medd's agent. Mr. Medd had come to the Exeter area in 1904 when he took over the Winchelsea creamery. In 1919 he bought the Exeter creamery from J. H. Scott and moved to Exeter. He lived in the large red house on Andrew Street near [illegible] Street. Medd served only two terms and in 1934 the riding, now known as Huron was contested by James Ballantyne (Independent Liberal Progressive) — he was covering all sides it seems, William Cooper (Independent) and George H. Elliott (Liberal-Conservative).

At the nomination meeting in Hensall things were going along fairly smoothly "with very little heckling" until Elliott "cast a reflection on the integrity of one of the speakers by saying that he is what I call a blood sucker". Pandemonium reigned with cries of "shame", "sit down", "that's dirty". The meeting did come to order again with Ballantyne receiving a "great ovation". Cooper's speech "brought forth many a hearty laugh and his address was not taken any too seriously". The election was a hotly contested one. Mitchell Hepburn came to the riding to lead a strong Liberal campaign which paid off and the Liberals after 29 years in opposition were returned to power. Ballantyne also won in Huron.

Ballantyne won again in 1937 over Dr. Hobbs Taylor, the Dashwood physician and Conservative. Dr. A. Moir contested the riding as the Temperance candidate. The Canada Temperance Act was an issue in this election in Huron. The Hepburn Government had "refused to accept the findings of the Supreme Court and the Privy Council in regard to the Canada Temperance Act as it applied to Huron County". Earl Rowe had promised to clean up the beverage rooms in Huron County. Dr. Taylor promised to see what he could do to help close up the beverage rooms, since "he was conscientious in the belief that they are a menace to the youth of the country". The Conservatives promised to recognize Canada Temperance Act counties as "dry territory". The forces for Temperance in Huron decided to support Dr. Taylor since "Hepburn has overruled the will of the people in this county and his action in placing beer parlours here was an outrage". Some Temperance men, however, supported the move to field a Temperance candidate; this man, Dr. Muir polled 942 votes to Taylor's 5862 but Ballantyne, despite the furor over Hepburn's liquor policy polled 7042 votes to hold Huron for the Grits. Dr. Muir was not subdued; he wrote the Times-Advocate as follows:

> "The liquor magnates think they have again dealt us another knockout blow, which will keep us sleeping... but in this they reckon wrongly for the Temperance people of Huron are stirred as never before to strike at the subtle python head of the liquor traffic wherever that head appears."

In 1943 another Exeter man entered the provincial field. Benson Tuckey replaced Ballantyne as the Liberal candidate. Tuckey and other local Liberals were not happy with Ballantyne despite his successful retention of the constituency for nearly 10 years. Tuckey was opposed by Taylor and Oestreicher. Taylor won the election by 461 votes over Tuckey who stood on a platform of "strong provincial rights and strong local government". Taylor increased his majority to 2000 in 1945 over Ballantyne and C.C.F.er Huchins. Taylor was ill and could not campaign but his supporters campaigned for him and pointed to the new highways, increased school grants, and reduced hydro rates. The Conservatives also played upon Huron's fears of socialism. Taylor called Caldwell, the C.C.F. leader, "the Karensky of the Canadian Revolution" and suggested that the C.C.F. would destroy freedom. It was during this time that E. D. Bell assumed the Presidency of the Huron riding.

Dr. Taylor died on Dec. 17, 1947 at the age of 51. He had been a "hard working Member interested in and working for the welfare of the riding". Two Exeter men contested the resulting by-election in February 1948. Tom Pryde and Ben Tuckey engaged in a "clean, square and above board" contest. Pryde also remarked that "when its all over Mr. Tuckey will still be doing his trucking". The Temperance people of Huron probably supported Pryde although the Temperance Federation said "we have no reason to look with favor on either party. Our cause has suffered greatly at the hands of both." Tom Pryde won the election but had to go to the people

again in June 1948 and fought a close battle with Frank Fingland who appeared at one point to have won. Pryde had conceded but when the final count was in he had a 109 majority over Fingland.

Thomas Pryde retained the seat again in 1951 and 1955 against John Armstrong and James Scott. Tom Pryde died in 1958 having served the Huron riding for 10 years. In May of that year C. S. MacNaughton began his political career which took him to the highest political office any Huron Member of the Ontario Legislature ever achieved. He eventually became Provincial Treasurer and was frequently acknowledged as the senior statesman in the government of John Robarts and later of William Davis. He won the 1958 by-election by 1164 votes over Dr. Addison of Clinton. In 1959 and 1963 he defeated Harry Strang and in 1967 he polled the largest majority ever recorded in Huron polling 8343 votes. Brigadier Smith of Bayfield had 3723 votes and John Boyne had 1340 votes. One hundred years previous in 1867 the narrowest margin was recorded with 10 being Gibbon's majority over Carling. Mr. MacNaughton is the only provincial member from this riding to attain cabinet rank.

This brief survey of Exeter's place in the political life of the county has shown how much entertainment value politics had in the early years when great meetings and rallies brought often thousands of people to town for a day of celebration. Small town politics now do not provide this element. Prime Ministers do not come to small towns much any more to make speeches. The day of the small town political rally is over. The day of the vehemently political small town weekly is over; no longer do the county papers refer to the 'enemy' when speaking of the opposing party. A great deal of color has been lost, and too often blandness is the characteristic of our politics. The gross acts of political bribery and corruption are gone, at least from our part of the country. Violent political arguments no longer are heard in the barber shops and bars and meeting halls of the villages and towns. Political loyalties are now blurred as the number of committed Tories and Grits diminish. As much of the partisanship and fun disappear from politics we run the risk of taking the government and our politicians too seriously, something which despite the surface vehemence of our politics in the past, we have not done in Canada.

People would not stand in the rain for two hours to hear the candidates speak today. The candidates don't 'harangue the troops' in the same way. Politics are now too solemn. Our greatest political figure was known to drink rather heavily and we have laughed at our politicians and they have laughed at themselves. We have, nevertheless, been law abiding but now the level of interest in politics at all levels has fallen, at the same time our degree of seriousness has increased. It seems paradoxical. So the great election fights of small town "Upper Canada" seem to be a thing of the past and it is unlikely that they will return.

Hopefully, we can recapture the spirit of our former political activity and direct it into creative political channels. Perhaps the youth will shape a new politics and hopefully the words of Sir John A. MacDonald still apply.

> "I believe that the spirit of our fathers, who fought and won battle after battle, still exists in their sons, and if I thought otherwise, I would sooner the grass was growing over my grave rather than I should see the degradation of the country which I loved so much and served so long."

Perhaps before closing this section it is worth noting again that Exeter and the immediately adjacent area can claim as native sons several important political figures. Three provincial premiers come to mind: William Melville Martin who was premier of Saskatchewan, came from Exeter, J. G. Gardiner whose political offices included the premiership of Saskatchewan as well as federal cabinet membership, and Thomas Greenway who became premier of Manitoba came from the area. Other names include Frank W. K. Tom who became an Ohio senator, W. H. Harvey who was a member of the Saskatchewan legislature, J. A. Gregory also a Saskatchewan M.P. Donald Fleming was born in Exeter. Fleming was a member of the Diefenbaker cabinet. Of recent date C. S. MacNaughton is the most well known.

Epilogue

But what of Exeter today?

A town whose population sign reads 3200 but whose population swells to 5000 once a year on Rodeo Day. Exeter is still primarily influenced by the agricultural land around it. Exeter's natives swear it's the best little town in Ontario, and the more newly-arrived inhabitants seem surprised when a stranger smiles at them on the street or says a friendly hello in a store. We don't have a movie theatre, but in the winter you can bowl, snowmobile, skate, toboggan, play hockey or learn a craft. In the summer the pool is full of kids and the parks ring with the sound of children's laughter.

Exeter is a town where the retired and not-quite-retired farmers congregate in the morning around the post office and discuss the weather or the price of beans — especially on Thursdays when the local newspaper is published.

It's a town where people come to get away from the big city rush and find it's a great place to raise a family. Then the kids grow up and head back to the city for some "action"[41]

And the kids, what of them? One hundred years have not made a big difference in the character of the kids of Exeter. Rural enough to still remain unsophisticated, urban enough to think they're worldly wise, Exeter's kids turn out pretty well — and after all, they are what the next hundred years are all about.

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Wooden, Joseph L.
Exeter, situate on the London & Goderich Road in the township of Stephen and Usborne, 30 miles from London and in the County of Huron, C.W.

History of Exeter

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EXETER

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[illegible]
STEPHEN [illegible]
[illegible] Miles [illegible] London
and [illegible] TY, HURON.
[illegible] W.
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Scale [illegible] Chains to an Inch

A History of Exeter, Ontario by Joseph L. Wooden

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EXETER

situate

ON THE LONDON & GODERICH ROAD
in the Township of
STEPHEN *and* USBORNE
30 Miles from London
and in the COUNTY *of* HURON.
C. W.

Survey'd May 1855
Scale 3 Chains to an Inch.

A History of Exeter, Ontario by Joseph L. Wooden

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To My Family

Diane, Susan, Deborah,
Catherine and John
and to the
memory of those whose
strength built this
community

The printing of this book was financed by the Council of the Town of Exeter. The book was printed by The Exeter Times-Advocate whose publisher, Mr. Robert Southcott extended his full cooperation in providing complete access to the files of the newspaper and in advising me on the general format of the book. The typing was done by my wife, Diane whose assistance is gratefully appreciated.

J. L. Wooden

Author's Note

The history of Exeter has been prepared with the help of so many people that an enumeration of their names would certainly result in the omission of someone. Consequently I will not attempt to name anyone. I will simply say thank you to everyone who assisted me in obtaining information.

There are a great many quotations indicated in the book and again I have not shown the source of these quotes in most cases. Most of the quotations come from newspaper files, letters, private papers, historical sketches by individuals and similar sources. The quotes are indicated, but acknowledgement of each quote would have given the book a cluttered appearance.

It was my original intention to have included a much larger section on the schools and churches. I also originally hoped to include a chapter on Exeter's contribution in the Great Wars along with some comment on the earlier military history. A chapter on the place of the small town in Ontario's history was also planned but all of these things are made impossible by the limitation of space and the pressure of time.

I have no doubt made errors and omitted events that some people may feel should have been included. Such errors and omissions are solely my responsibility and not those of the people who assisted me.

I hope The History of Exeter will provide some insight into the life of small town Ontario and provide enjoyment to those who have some connection with Exeter.

The work on this History should have been started many years ago so that it could have been more complete and more accurate. However, publication was planned so that the book would be available during Exeter's Centennial Year, 1973.

Exeter, Ontario
January, 1973

J. L. Wooden

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chapter 1

The Beginnings of Exeter

To hunt to fight to wait for years to hew out a farm to make a homestead one must needs be a man.

A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees

One hundred and forty years is not really a long time on the scale of human history Seven score years — the lifetime of two men and yet that is the period of time that has passed since the first white man took his axe to the great forest of this region and began transforming it from a densely wooded area to an open agricultural land from which most of the trees have been removed Down went the great oaks some of which, such as John Galt's famous Beverly Oak measured thirty three feet in girth and eighty feet in the height of its trunk above the top of which rose the crown of vast branches, down came the giant black cherry trees as big as ten feet in girth and fifty feet high down came buttonwoods so big that several men could crawl into a hollowed trunk and drink a quart of whiskey in honor of its size as "Tiger" Dunlop and his cronies did once. Down they came — black walnut basswood maple elm — as the settlers took their dive into the woods Some would wish that the settlers had left a few of the great trees standing and that we had some large acreages of climax woods left but it is only lately that we have begun to look with nostalgia upon the forest "The Canadian settler hated a tree, he regarded it as his natural enemy as something to be destroyed, eradicated, annihilated by all and any means

So great woods covered the land which was called the Huron Tract, a million acres of land in the heart of Upper Canada owned by the Canada Company, a land and settlement company which had been established in England in 1826 That part of the Huron Tract in which Exeter eventually developed was not greatly different from the rest of the Tract except perhaps that it was wetter and less amenable to settlement than other sections The area was also off the Huron Road which brought in the settlers from the east and helped the areas north of Exeter fill in more quickly than the Exeter area The first written reference to the Exeter area is found in the diaries of the Rev William Proudfoot who passed through the area in 1833 He described the area as having "excellent soil" with the trees "being chiefly maple, elm, oak, ironwood, and black ash" On the whole, however Proudfoot was happy to pass through the area which he considered to be a "dreary region" When he passed up the London Road, which at that time was barely a trail, there were only two dwellings in what is now Exeter These were the shanties of James Willis and William McConnell Proudfoot spent the night in McConnell's shanty, which also served as a tavern or inn; this was Exeter's first hotel and was erected in February, 1833 It stood somewhere near where the Presbyterian Church now stands. Proudfoot was a Presbyterian missionary so there is a nice anticipatory touch in the site of his lodging Proudfoot described McConnell's tavern as "the most wretched place I have ever put a night in The logs are not well built, the interstices are very carelessly filled in, and the wind finds its way between the logs and the door did not fit by at least three or four inches" It certainly was not as good as the inn operated by McConnell's father at Elginfield Proudfoot did not like the food either; it was probably like most tavern food at the time and consisted of heavy Indian meal bread, fried pork or beef tallow and tea Butter and coffee were luxuries, sugar and milk were virtually nonexistent

Proudfoot was probably too hard on William McConnell who had only just built the shanty a short time, perhaps only a few weeks, before Proudfoot came McConnell was a Canada Company contractor and he was not only required to maintain his shanty as an inn but also to maintain the twenty mile section of the London Road from Clandeboye to Clinton McConnell eventually acquired some four hundred acres on both sides of the Ausable River and on both sides of the London Road, some of this land was deeded to McConnell by the Canada Company as part payment for his work on the road. He built the first saw mill in the area on the river in 1833 and in 1834 he built the first grist mill and dam, probably quite near where the dam is now. This mill ground only whole wheat flour for years. One of his children, born in 1833, is said to have been "the first white child born in the region". This statement may not be quite accurate since other sources suggest that a son of Thomas Lamb, who had settled a short distance north of McConnell, was the first white child born in the area. Lamb's son was probably the first to be born in the Huron Tract between London and Goderich. However, McConnell "was for many years one of the outstanding promoters of the district" and to him goes the honor of being the first to operate a tavern and the first to operate a manufacturing activity in the area. McConnell was also a Huron District Councillor for the United Townships of Usborne, Stephen and Hay in 1842. He was not, however, the first settler in what is now Exeter.

The first white settlers to take up land in what is now Exeter were James Willis and his wife Jane. They "braved the terrors of loneliness and an unknown region". He took up Lot 20, London Road Survey, Usborne Township which was in the south-east part of what is now Exeter. Willis came up the London Road sometime during the winter of 1832 and built his first shanty somewhere in the area of what is now Main and Simcoe Streets. He left his wife in London while he built his cabin which was no doubt "rudely constructed of small round logs. The roof was covered with clap boards or basswood trough and the spaces between the logs were stuffed with moss or clay." These first shanties were makeshift structures erected to serve only for a few years until such time as the settler could build his "hewed log farmhouse" or perhaps in the area we are talking about, frame or brick residences replaced the log shanty directly.

Willis was the only settler within a twenty-mile distance in any direction; the London Road had been opened only three years before he came and was merely a sleigh track at this time. It had not yet been logged or stumped north of Lucan. James and Jane Willis, then, were the first pioneers in the whole area and rank among the very first settlers in the whole Huron Tract. In Goderich, Dunlop's "castle" and a few log cabins owned by Gooding, Louis Belmore, Frank Tranch, Frank Kneshaw, Peter Andrews and Feltre Fisher were the only signs of settlement in 1832. Ben Miller's mill had been built, but few other signs of settlement were visible in this region. Unlike the later arrivals to the Exeter area, who came from Devon, Willis had emigrated from Armagh, Ireland, a short time before coming to the Huron Tract.

There are the usual stories about the Willis family, as there are

about other pioneers. For example, "Mrs. Willis had a particular dread of wolves. This was in part a result of their continued howling at night. At times when her husband was away, she found the noise almost unendurable." There was one occasion when Jane was roasting venison over her hearth fire when a large grey wolf bounded through the door, "seized the piece of meat and was gone". Wolves carried off small pigs and other animals from the Willis yard. Despite the hardships, which together with heavy work and child-bearing made many pioneer women into drudges or "lonely neurotics", Jane Willis reached the age of ninety and saw "the trackless forest" transformed into the thriving village of Exeter where she was known as "Granny Willis"; she died on May 30, 1893.

Another well-known story concerns James Willis who walked in the spring of 1833 to London to buy a hoe. He had one shilling but found that a hoe cost three shillings. So he walked home and planted his potatoes with his axe on the small area which he had cleared. It is said that he obtained an excellent yield of potatoes from the soil between the stumps.

There is no record of why Willis chose the spot that eventually became Exeter. Perhaps he was aware that the site which he picked was half way between London and Goderich and perhaps he felt that eventually some development would occur. In any case he was the first, but he was soon followed by other pioneers who took up land along the London Road. Incidentally, the enlarged brick Willis residence still stands behind Graham Arthur's Garage. The brick part was added later by George Willis. William May settled a short distance south of Willis on June 21, 1832; this was just a few months after Willis came. Thomas Lamb settled a few miles north of Willis about the same time that May came. John Balkwill, a brother-in-law of May, had apparently cleared four acres during the summer of 1831 and being "so pleased with the country," he returned to Devonshire to induce his brothers and friends to come. It was Balkwill that persuaded May to come. These two families came from Merton in Devonshire; a number of others also came from Merton as well as neighbouring parishes.

Balkwill and May took up land along the London Road and encouraged others to come. This marked the beginning of the "Devon Settlement" which was centred about two miles south of what is now Exeter around the Balkwill house which was known as the "Devonshire Inn". The Balkwill Inn or tavern served the area for many years. It passed from the Balkwills in 1855 when the tavern licence was transferred to Mr. McDonald.

The May homestead was the first billet for the itinerant clergy of the area and also the site of the first illicit whiskey still in the area. It is not reported whether the one had anything to do with the other. The whiskey still may in fact not have been illegal; it may be that Mr. May made more whiskey than he was legally allowed to make. The minutes for Usborne Township for February 1857 note that May was suspended from making whiskey for twelve months. It was implied that he exceeded the legal limit for home stills.

Some of the other Devon men to come in the 1830's included Louis Holman, George Snell, Richard Handford and Thomas Bissett. These men and their families joined May and Balkwill along the London Road in the first three miles south of what is now Exeter in the "Devon Settlement". Those Devonshire men were the first of a very large number who came to the Exeter, Usborne and Stephen Township areas during the period 1830-1870. The size of the families of these early settlers helped the area grow. For example, Handford had three daughters and eight sons, and Holman had seven boys and five girls. Five families living on adjacent farms in the Devon settlement had fifty children among them.

There may be some argument as to who was the first Devonshire man to come to these parts. The honor goes to either John Balkwill or Richard Handford. James Handford in 1933 stated that his father Richard had "the honor of being the very first man to leave Devonshire for Canada". James also stated that Handford's letters home "brought out such an influx of settlers that for miles around his home the country was settled with Devon folk, a sturdy, honest, thrifty people, who made this part of the country blossom." So Richard Handford, "a quiet, energetic man", left Devon when he was twenty one, "although his parents pleaded with him with tears not to leave dear old Devon." He was accompanied by William Rattenbury and the two of them reached Toronto with only two shillings between them. They worked in Peel County for a time, but later walked to Egmondville along the Huron Road. Handford went south and eventually took up three hundred acres first occupying Lot 7, Concession 1, Stephen Township which was about three miles south of where Exeter would be on the London Road. Rattenbury went on to the "Corners" and is supposed to have named the spot Clinton after Lt. Gen. Lord Clinton on whose estate he had been a tenant farmer. Rattenbury operated the "Rattenbury Hotel" there for fifty years. Handford built his shanty roofed with "basswood scoops" shortly after May and Balkwill had built their cabins. Richard married Dorothy Bissett, daughter of Thomas Bissett. The Bissetts had come from Merton, Devonshire in 1834. Dorothy was clearly a pioneer woman. When her family landed in Toronto she evidently had decided to remain there to work. After a year the fifteen year old girl decided to rejoin her family. She walked the one hundred

and fifty miles alone from Toronto to Egmondville and south to the family's home in the Devon settlement. This walk was through mostly untamed forest at the time. She married Handford three years later.

The Handfords we noted, had eight sons and three daughters. One of these sons was James who lived to be Exeter's grand old man dying in 1936 at the age of ninety-eight. James recalled the pioneer days very well and told of the Indians who lived on the Handford farm, including Chief Sarponace, who with his men in 1860, did a war dance before the Prince of Wales when His Royal Highness visited London. The prince was delighted and amused. It was reported by W. H. Johnson that James and Richard Handford and Holman were also in the dance. Johnson also noted the following: "The next day great doings were planned for the Fair Grounds and the crowd was larger than the day before. These three young men were there to see with the rest. On account of taking part in the war dance the day before they wished to secure a place with the prince. As they pushed forward they were stopped by a member of the prince's bodyguard but nothing daunted they still moved closer. The soldier drew his sword and said he would cut off their heads if they dared to go farther. Dick Holman's fist collided with the guard's chin and the sword flew through the air. Then they realized what they had done. The two Dicks lost themselves in the crowd and James, who was younger, disappeared also.

The Handfords had excellent relations with the Indians, who would likely have been Chippawas or Neutrals. While Richard Handford and Louis Holman were away as militia men during the 1837 rebellion the Indians who lived on Handford's land came to the house and cut the wood, fed the cows and did other chores. These Indians lived in the area for years earning a living by making baskets, axe handles and other items; they fished, hunted and trapped beaver as well. The Handford and Holman men learned much about the woods from the Indians; they learned Indian lore, the language, war dances and other Indian customs. James was an expert at logging bees, barn raisings and at cradling grain. He also won many ploughing matches as a boy winning his first competition in a field where the Exeter Opera House once stood; ploughing was done with a yoke of oxen. At this time even London was just a small community and James Handford could recall visits there. One occasion he went with his uncle Jack Bissett who took on a number of soldiers in battle. He "licked everybody" so the soldiers treated him to a "big drunk" and put him to bed.

The Handford name has been found in the Exeter area for about one hundred and forty years. Tom Handford was the area's most well known horse dealer. Many of the Handfords have

left the area. Silas Handford lived with his family on Main Street in one of Exeter's oldest frame buildings on Main Street South; it was torn down in 1940. Silas' sons moved away, Augustus to Renfrew, another to Wisconsin and two to Sarnia. A Miss Handford who lived on Gidley Street was the last Handford to reside in Exeter.

Other early arrivals along the London Road included the Case family from Wicklow, Ireland. Thomas Case had ten sons and this family came in 1836. William Elder came in 1836. The Daymans came to the area quite early and may have been the third family to take up a location in what is now Exeter, joining McConnell and Willis. George McLeod, a "wood ranger" for the Canada Company came to the area from Scotland in 1843. These people, mainly from Devon, who came in the 1830's were the first pioneers of this immediate area. They were the forerunners of the later Devonshire people who came in the late 1840's and early 1850's. The years 1849-1858 were the peak years of Devon migration to North America. In those years 15,000 people sailed from the port of Plymouth. There was little additional settlement in what is now Exeter until the late 1840's, mainly, it seems because the land was low and wet. Aside from those of McConnell, Willis and Dayman, there were few other dwellings in what is now Exeter until the late 1840's. There must have been some others in the immediate area, however, since a school was erected in Francistown on the Usborne side in 1838. More will be said later about the school.

The clearing of the land proceeded although it was slow work, "you may swing the axe here from morning to night for a week before you let the daylight in upon you," it was said. Indeed, with "perfect strength, good fortune and good weather" it took three weeks to clear one acre but even then the stumps remained. These early Devon folk were joined by others from the same parishes as time went on. The Herns, Thomas and Elizabeth (Manning) came from Devon in 1852; their voyage took nine weeks and claimed the lives of two of their children; they eventually settled near Winchelsea. William Sweet and his wife Mary (Jones) settled south of Exeter in the late 1830's. William Horn from Sutcombe, Devonshire emigrated in 1843 and came to Usborne in 1853. Thomas Shute from Merton, Devon took up Lot 14, Concession 5 in 1852; he, like many other pioneers had a large family — in his case twelve. The Eacretts came to what is now Exeter in 1853. Charles Eacrett operated a harness and shoe making shop and built the Gould and Jory block. Bagshaw, Poplestone, Heywood (also from Merton Parish), Jones from Langtree, Devon, Tom Collins and William Sanders were other early arrivals to the immediate area.

Also coming from Devon, Morchard Bishop Parish, to be ex act were the Southcotts and the Drews. William Drew came with his family in 1849 to London where his father, mother and two sisters died of cholera. He and four younger brothers and sisters walked to Exeter in 1854. Drew became one of the more active businessmen of the area, building many of the early frame houses. He also built the Commercial Hotel about 1860 and operated it for twelve years, then selling it to John Hawkshaw. He had a furniture business which he eventually sold to R. N. Rowe. It is said that Drew suggested the name "Exeter Times" to White in 1873 when he came to found the paper. Charles Southcott came to Exeter in 1856 and opened a tailor shop. More will be said about Drew and Southcott later.

From Linton, Devonshire in 1849 came Richard Delbridge; he had been born on June 13, 1803. He was a shepherd in Exmoor Forest, Devon when he married in 1835. In 1849 he settled in Lobo Township and in 1853 he moved to Usborne, "a veritable wilderness". It is said that he had to "underbrush a road through the woods to allow his oxen to pass from Elimville to the lot which he had selected for his house." Richard is reported to have been "a quiet, industrious man, a kind husband, and an indulgent father, highly respected by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance." When he died on February 18, 1885, "his remains were followed to the grave by ninety vehicles filled with mourning relatives and sympathizing friends." One of his sons, John, became a well known Usborne farmer who frequently challenged his neighbors with feats of agricultural productivity; for example, he produced a two thousand pound beef cow once and published a challenge, "who can beat it?" He once brought to town a sixty-five pound pumpkin and again said, "who can beat it?" This John was the grandfather of the present Mayor of Exeter, Mr. John H. W. Delbridge.

We will mention one or two other early arrivals. Thomas Gidley came from London, England and settled on Lot 21, Concession 1, Stephen Township. He and his father Bartholomew cleared the bush and built a log cabin in what is now the centre of Exeter; this was in 1852. He later built a "large and stately house" on the end of Gidley Street. It is now occupied by Ted Jones. Thomas Gidley was a cabinet maker in London, England and he carried on his craft in Exeter. He started a chair and furniture factory in 1859; this factory was on the site of the Beaver Lumber Company buildings. Gidley also built the "Oddfellows block" on Main Street. In addition he farmed in Stephen Township and was Reeve there from 1860-1863. He had three sons, Richard, Charles and Samuel. He left his farm to the first named and the furniture factory to Charles and Samuel. Charles Gidley built the large house on William Street now occupied by Douglas Gould. The house was "built on a triple lot in a grove of pine and honey locust trees". Charles died on January 7, 1917, at the age of seventy-eight. Samuel moved to Duluth in 1904. Samuel's son Harry carried on the woodworking business. However, Harry Gidley is remembered more for his contribution to the musical life of Exeter since he managed the Opera House for many years and was leader of the Exeter Brass Band for years. Richard Gidley's wife (Honor Bissett) was the first person to be buried in the Exeter Cemetery. That was in 1866. The Gidley name is a well known one in the Exeter area and more will be said about the family later.

A few other settlers who came from Devon may be mentioned. The Mannings came in 1852 and mention is made of Richard Manning later. The Cornish family also came from Devon in 1852; one of them, John Cornish, was a framer and a builder who "showed no fear at the top of frames of the highest barns". Cornish was an expert with the broad axe. He was, in addition, an expert with the jug; it was said that he needed lots of whiskey at a barn raising. The Creech's, Chings, and Johns also came from Devonshire. John Johns came with his family from Langtree Parish, Devon in 1848 and settled on Lot 12, Concession 6, Usborne Township in 1850. He was the second settler in that Concession. It is reported that young Johns was the first pupil in the first Winchelsea School. There is also the report that Johns was a great axe man; one of his greatest pleasures in life was felling trees. Johns married Sarah Cudmore in 1873; the couple had six children, three girls and three boys (Richard, Sam and Charles). The Johns family have been well represented in Exeter over the years. David Johns was postmaster for many years; more is said about David Johns in a later chapter. Kenneth Johns served on the South Huron District High School Board for many years and was Chairman for much of the time. Walter Johns became a classics scholar and eventually became President of the University of Alberta, a post he held for some years.

With these and many others coming from Devonshire during the period from the early 1830's to the 1870's it is not surprising that Devonshire place names like Exeter and Crediton appeared in the area. Nor is it surprising to find the following description of Exeter written in 1889 in the London Free Press:

> Exeter is perhaps the most English place in Canada. One hears the broad dialect of Devonshire and Cornwall from the labourers heaping up the corporation mud that has been gathering all winter and it greets you from the merchant behind his counter and the butcher at his stall. It stares at you from the business signs where such names as Smallacombe, Bawden, Hamlyn, Brimacombe, Snell and Trevithick are doing their share to perpetuate the memory of old Exeter.

Barnstable, Moulton, North and South Crediton, Portsmouth and Truro

These early settlers' main line of communication was the London Road. One of the early stage drivers on the Road between London and Goderich was Jack Quick. He brought the news of the outside world and made small purchases for the settlers who would give him the money for the item to be purchased. Jack would as likely as not, spend the money on booze. He would however use the next settler's money to purchase the first one's item. He was always robbing one to pay for the other's goods, and consequently was always behind. But no one seemed to mind. More is found on the stage lines in the chapter on transportation.

Before we end this brief chapter on the earliest beginnings of Exeter we must comment on two more families — perhaps the two most influential families in the early history of Exeter. These are the Carlings and the Pickards. In 1818 Thomas Carling landed in Quebec City. He was twenty-one and had come from his native Yorkshire soil to seek his future in Canada. He reached York (Toronto) and from there he walked to Port Talbot through the Upper Canadian wilds. The fact that he killed a wolf with a stick on the way testifies to how wild it was. He purchased land from Col. Talbot. Later on he married Margaret Routledge and the couple took up residence on a farm near St. Johns in London Township. The isolation of the area is demonstrated by the fact that the marriage bans were published for three weeks on trees by the crossroads. Tom and Margaret were the first to be married in the area and the ceremony was performed by the Magistrate, Col. Burwell. The Carlings had five boys, unfortunately only three lived

The Carling Home

Isaac Carling and Family

The eldest son was William, the youngest was John and the middle son was Isaac, named after Tom's brother who had been a non-commissioned officer in the First Life Guards and who had fought at Waterloo. John and William took over the small brewing business which their father had started more as a hobby than anything else, but the two boys felt the business had possibilities. Isaac was apprenticed as a tanner at E. W. Hyman's tannery in London. In 1846 Isaac married Ann Balkwill of the "Devonshire Settlement" and in 1847 at the age of twenty two he arrived in what was to become Exeter. Carling built a tannery near where the Tuckey Beverage plant is now located and he opened a general store where the Bell and Laughton building is located. Carling's arrival really marked the beginning of a village, it was not much but Carling "thought he saw a future for the spot". Carling became involved in local affairs almost immediately. In 1851 he was appointed an Inspector of Taverns along with George McLeod and Robert Walker. The three shared the stipend of one pound ten shillings. Carling was also a Councillor for the United Townships of Usborne and Stephen. In 1867 he was Reeve of Stephen. Isaac later became the Member of the Legislative Assembly in whose 1866 journal it is noted that "Isaac Carling petitioned the government" that certain lands in the Exeter area be withdrawn from the Canada Company and sold to settlers. Carling unseated Gibbon in the contested election of 1867 to become South Huron's first M.L.A. after Confederation. He was, of course, Exeter's first Reeve. Carling eventually built the large house on Huron Street (now the hospital). Isaac had three sons and six daughters; his sons were Thomas, William and Isaac Jr. Isaac Sr. died in 1895 at the age of seventy having "had a stroke of paralysis" some years before. "He bore his dreadful affliction with exemplary meekness and patience". This genial and hospitable gentleman passed "quietly away at his hitherto happy and beautiful home" in 1895. More is said about Mr. Carling in other sections of the history of Exeter, he played a major part in the growth of Exeter, having been "the founder and first Reeve", Member of the Legislative Assembly, a prime mover in bringing the railway to Exeter and a most important member of the business community. His importance to the community was witnessed by the presence of "over one hundred conveyances in his funeral cortege". As we said we will be discussing in later chapters more about Carling's work; this "earnest and sincere Christian and scrupulously honest and true gentleman" contributed perhaps more than anyone else to the emergence of a village, indeed, there is some indication that the name Carling's Corners was applied to the embryo settlement in the late 1840's and early 1850's.

Richard Pickard

Of equal importance to Carling's contribution to Exeter's growth was that of James Pickard. "Boss" Pickard as he came to be called arrived in the Exeter area "with little but his natural qualities to fit him for a fight with what was even then a comparative wilderness". The Pickards were from Ringsast Parish in Devon and the family played a great part in Exeter's growth. James opened a small store first just east of Exeter, then a larger business in the village. We will discuss Pickard's business ventures later. James became known immediately to the local officials and was appointed fence viewer in 1852. In 1854 Pickard became an Usborne Township Councillor and remained on the Council until 1857. He was also Pathmaster in Ward two, Usborne Township. The Pathmaster "superintended the work on the roads performed by Statute Labor within the beat for which the Pathmaster was responsible".

James' brother Richard came to Canada in 1849 with other

members of the family. James seems to have arrived in Canada in 1834 at the age of fourteen; he died in 1904 at the age of eighty three. Richard worked with James until the early 1870's when he went into business with George Samwell. The Pickard-Samwell businesses flourished but again we will discuss this later. In politics James was a Tory and Richard a Grit. James was on the first Council and it was James Pickard who is reputed to have given Exeter its name after the great city in Devonshire, England.

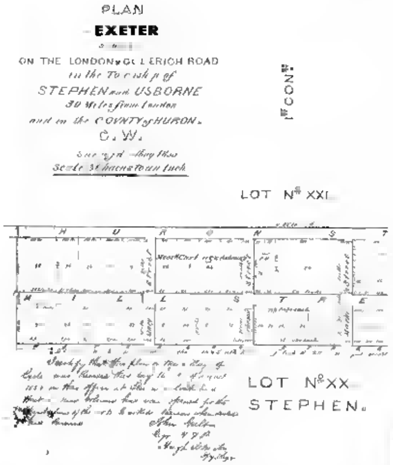
Dr. Hyndman B. V. Elliott Isaac Carling

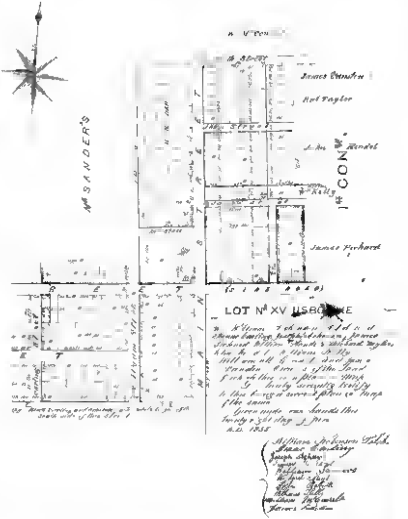
Three of Early Exeter's Leading Citizens

This chapter on the beginnings of Exeter shows that by the early 1850's there was an indication that a village was beginning. In May, 1855 a village plan was surveyed by William Robinson and registered in Goderich. On the plan is written, "I certify that this plan of the village of Exeter was recorded this day the third of August, 1855 in this office at eleven o'clock and that a new volume has been opened for the Registration of the lots marked thereon when deeded and received." The statement was signed by John Galt, Registrar of Huron and Bruce. This first survey had been urged by Isaac Carling and James Pickard and the other owners of land involved in the survey. These other owners were Joseph Acheson, William Sanders, Richard Taylor, John Randel, William Kelly, William McConnell, and James Vanstone.

This plan of the Village of Exeter was limited to the area shown on page 14 and 15.

It is not difficult to surmise the reasons for the street names. Main is obvious, James for James Pickard and Elizabeth for his wife. North is obvious, Ann Street for Isaac Carling's wife, Carling for the family, William for William Sanders, Market because the plans called for a market square in that area. Acheson for Joseph


PLAN
EXETER
ON THE LONDON & GODERICH ROAD
in the Township of
STEPHEN and USBORNE
30 Miles from London
and in the COUNTY of HURON.
C. W.
Scale 3 chains to an inch
1st CON.
LOT No XXI
HURON ST
MILL STREET
LOT No XX
STEPHEN.


Mrs SANDER'S
1st CONN
James Camden
Rob Taylor
John Handel
Kelly
James Pickard
LOT Nº XV USBO[illegible]E
A.D. 1855

Acheson, Mill because of James Pickard's saw mill in that section of the village. Mary is perhaps for Acheson's wife and John may have been for John Randel, the name Union Street is not readily explained. It may be noted that the County of Huron Gazeteer for 1863 suggested that the Canada Company had laid out a village plan in 1833 but no information exists to substantiate this statement.

The second village plan followed in September 1855 when Thomas Gidley subdivided his land which lay between Main and Marlborough Streets and between Sanders and Victoria Streets. Richard Taylor added the third section to the village by surveying the area along the north side of John Street east to Bodman. In 1856 Exeter was extended to Hill Street.

Additional plans were developed in 1864 when Andrew McConnell had his land from the river north to the Thames Road surveyed. This plan had three buildings marked on it: one was Pickard's grist mill, the other two are open to question but the best guess is that one was W. H. Verity's house near where the Motel is now and the other on the corner must have been the Francistown hotel. There were other buildings however at this time. McConnell's own buildings, the store operated by John McDonnell, and Verity's foundry are some that were there.

Other plans followed, in 1875 John Southcott, in 1878 James Pickard, in 1881 and 1894 William Bawden, in 1895 Joseph Davis had plans of subdivision developed.

So in 1855, then, Exeter was first laid out in village lots and streets. In 1856 one of the above-mentioned plans showed thirty-one buildings. It is extremely difficult to identify all of these but it is possible to identify some. Among the buildings shown on this 1856 plan were Pickard's saw mill on Huron Street between Market and Acheson Streets, Pickard's store, and three others on Main Street between Huron and James Streets. William Drew's property on the corner of Huron and Main Streets had three buildings shown. There was a house on the corner of Huron and Andrew Streets, and there were fifteen buildings on the west side of Main between Huron and North Streets (Sanders Street). Of these thirty-one buildings, perhaps half were houses. This figure may be confirmed by a comment of Richard Pickard's wife who was an Elston and whose family came in 1856 to Exeter. Mrs. Pickard remarked that there were only fourteen houses in Exeter in 1856; this could not include the few houses in Francistown. One could assume then that there were about one hundred people.

Growth in 1856 continued. There were fifty-five sales of land in 1856 in the surveyed part of the village of Exeter. There had been only seven transactions in the period from August to December 1855

The first notation of Exeter in the minutes of Usborne Township occurred on February 2, 1857 when the Council instructed the clerk to prepare a map showing the Village of Exeter. During the late 1850's and 1860's considerable growth occurred. Lovell's Directory claimed that Exeter and Francistown had six hundred people by 1858 but this figure seems to be considerably inflated. It is highly unlikely that there would be more than three hundred. By 1873 the growth was such that men like James Pickard and Isaac Carling led the movement to have Exeter incorporated as a village. In subsequent sections of this history of Exeter we will look at the various aspects of Exeter's growth

chapter 2

"Main Street"
Exeter's Business Community

"Enterprising Exeter, the hustlers for trade."
(The Exeter Times)

Busy — well, I should think so! Ask any of its inhabitants if Mariposa isn't a busy, hustling, thriving town.
(Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town)

"The town, I say, has one broad street . . . commonly called Main Street. . . . On Main Street are a number of buildings of extraordinary importance — Smith's Hotel and the Continental and the Mariposa House, and two banks, to say nothing of McArthy's block (erected 1878) and Glover's Hardware Store with the Oddfellows Hall above it. . . ." Leacock goes on describing Mariposa and in so doing he could just as easily be describing a dozen Ontario towns of the last part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century.

Change Mariposa's business names and Exeter becomes the town in the description. "But once in the Main Street," writes a London Free Press writer in 1889, "you see signs of evident prosperity, comfort and enterprise. Here and there are piles of brick and lumber, marking the places where new buildings will soon be in the course of erection. Although fully two thousand in population, Exeter is satisfied to call itself a village, and go on in its steady way while places of half its population and about a quarter of its wealth call themselves towns and flourish in semi-urban grandeur with a mayor and full array of councillors. The main attraction of Exeter is certainly its Episcopal Church. While the writer did not go on to comment on the Main street he could have noted at that time the large and imposing three storey place of business of James Pickard, the Samwell and Pickard block, Acheson's Central Hotel, Brimacombe's Mansion House. Perhaps the writer quenched his thirst in the barroom of the Commercial Hotel and examined the merchandise in C. and S. Gidley's furniture store (with the Oddfellows' Hall above it). He may have purchased a bottle of spirits in one of several stores dispensing liquor or changed a bill in Molson's Bank. He could have stopped in any of these places of business and others because in 1885 Exeter was experiencing its most prosperous decade. In forty years or so the village had emerged from a tiny collection of buildings concentrated in the area between Huron Street and John Street to take on the appearance which has been retained basically ever since.

While the business and industrial history of the community began with the establishment of McConnell's two mills in the early 1830's it was not until the late 1840's that there were any real signs that a village might develop. In 1847 Isaac Carling came up the London Road and opened a general store and tannery as we noted in the previous chapter. The next year saw Joseph Acheson, the first of that family to come to Exeter, open a shoemaking shop. When Acheson began selling his boots and shoes there were only three or four log houses, Carling's businesses and McConnell's establishments within the limits of what was to become Exeter. Acheson's store, which was on Main Street, possibly between Anne and John Streets burned in 1865. James Pickard arrived in 1851 or 1852 and opened the third store in Exeter; his large building was erected by 1855 or 1856. Shortly after Pickard's arrival a number of others came including Thomas Gidley, Thomas Bissett, who opened a livery barn and John McDonnell, who came from Cornwall and opened a store for Gunn and Gordon in Francistown, and William Sanders. The latter two named, Sanders and McDonnell became postmasters in 1855. Sanders was appointed in the post village of Exeter and McDonnell was named postmaster of the post village of Francistown. There is some question as to whether or not Francistown was in fact a post village. The Hay post office which is in Exeter north now was not in Francistown in the early years; it was two miles north. In 1863 James Murray was postmaster there. McDonnell was named the area's first Issuer of Marriage Licenses in 1857, a post he held until 1886. In addition he was appointed Justice of the Peace succeeding "Squire" Thomas Gidley.

By 1855 there was in existence the nucleus of a village centred on the London Road-Huron Street crossroads. There were about thirty buildings, mostly on Main Street between Huron Street and North Street (later renamed Sanders Street). There were nine land owners in the area and these nine, including Carling, Acheson, Pickard, Sanders, William McConnell and four others had a village plan surveyed and registered on the third of August, 1855. This date could be taken as the date on which Exeter began as a village. The name was probably chosen by James Pickard. About the same time Francistown was showing signs of emerging as a village with John McDonnell's store, which he had purchased from Gunn and Gordon, and a few other buildings. There is reason to believe that the hotel, later known as Walper's hotel also existed by the mid-1850's.

Thus, by the mid-1850's the nuclei of two villages were emerging: Francistown being the area around the London and Lake Roads intersection and extending south towards the river where the mills owned by McConnell were located and Exeter, which as was noted above, was forming around the Huron Street and London Road crossroads. The latter settlement was briefly known as Carling's Corners but was officially designated Exeter because of the increasing number of Devonshire people settling in the area. James Pickard himself coming from Devonshire apparently urged that the name be adopted. So the name of the great Devon city was carried to another part of the world by Devon men who had long before carried the name to New England as well. The origin of the name Francistown is unknown.

By 1860 Exeter had six stores. These were William Trick, tinsmith; John Southcott, groceries; H.G. Broderick (General merchant), Carlings, Achesons, and Pickards. There were four factories, three schools, three churches, Balkwill's Tavern, and a Masonic Lodge of which Isaac Carling was Worshipful Master. The Masonic Lebanon Forest Lodge No. 133 met on the "first Monday on or before full moon" at William Balkwill's Hotel. There was also an Orange Lodge. By the same time Francistown had two stores, a foundry (Verity's) and a fine hotel. Both settlements had been designated post villages, as was mentioned in 1855. Also by 1855 a doctor had taken up residence in Exeter. Dr. John Hyndman arrived in the "Devonshire Settlement" south of Exeter in 1851, the year in which he graduated from the Toronto Medical College. Hyndman's father Henry had been one of the leading men in the early settlement of Huron County having settled

A very early scene on Exeter's Main Street.
Dr. John Hyndman is shown in this picture.

in Colborne Township near Goderich. The Hyndmans, Lizers and Dunlops were among the most important figures in the area. Hyndman was appointed the first Sheriff of the County The family experienced a number of tragic events including the loss of a child and the destruction by fire of the family home Henry Hyndman took his family back to Scotland but two of his sons returned to Huron County, one to Goderich and John to Exeter A third son was killed in the "bloody trenches of Sebastopol" during the Crimean war Dr John Hyndman then settled in Exeter in 1855 shortly after his marriage to Charlotte Quick the daughter of one of the early settlers south of Exeter in "Devon" Dr Hyndman practiced in Exeter until 1899 when he died "His genial presence courtly manner and kindly smile will be missed by all of us," quoted the Times Hyndman had five sons John, George William Garnet and Hugh and one daughter Edith The last two named boys became doctors with Hugh carrying on the practice in Exeter

During the 1860's Exeter continued to develop Among the businesses then in existence were the oldest six stores mentioned previously that is the stores of Carling Acheson Pickard Broderick, Trick and Southcott In addition to these stores a number of other places of business had been established Some of these were Joseph Azers (grocer) John Backer (blacksmith) John and James Balkwill (tavern), William G Bissett (tin and coppersmith) Charles Boulton (drugs and P L S), Robert Brabson and W H Verity (foundry) William Box (cabinet maker) John Brawn (tailor), Mark Clark (boots and shoes) J Clarke (general merchant) Richard Davis (blacksmith carriage and wagon maker) Eldred Drew (cabinet maker door sashes blinds) William Drew (Commercial Hotel) C and G Eacrett (saddlers) William Fanson (harnessmaker) Robert Elston (grocer) Alex Dyer (woodwork) A Freeman (general merchant), Gidley Brothers (cabinet makers and undertakers), James Gordon (tavern), William Grigg (tailor, book seller and bible depository), David Johns (tinsmith), Thomas Fitton (clock and watch maker), J. and C. Southcott (merchants), Henry Lambrook (cabinet maker), Claudius Hamilton (druggist), John McConnell (tavern), James McNabb (cabinetmaker), James Sherbrooke (carpenter), Isaac Sinale (saddler), Sinclair Tait (cooper), John Treble (boots and shoes), John Trick (blacksmith), J. Vanstone (watchmaker), Dr H. R. Winan (drugs).

Another early scene on Exeter's Main Street showing David Johns' Tin Shop probably at the corner of James and Main Streets. No information is available to explain the gathering.

By the early 1870's the following list was compiled giving Exeter two post offices, seven general stores, three hardwares, six groceries, two drug stores, two book stores, two jewelry stores, two shoe stores, three tin and stove smiths, four furniture stores, six harness shops, four tailors, one liquor store, several barbers, butchers, bakers, a confectionery, a music store, two photographers, two lawyers, six doctors, three banks, and two telegraph offices.

A century ago these places of business were generally located along Main Street which was beginning to bear some resemblance to the street as it is at present. A number of the brick buildings which are the landmarks along the business street had been erected. James Pickard's large store, Escrett's block (now Gould and Jory), Samwell and Pickard's block (opened 1873), the Commercial Hotel, Grigg's building, Drew's store, Fanson's block, Dr. Browning's store, William Sanders' two stores, were among the brick stores already erected by 1873 and still standing. There were in addition to these, a good number of frame buildings housing other places of business. Over the next thirty years, most of these were removed or replaced by brick buildings, for example, the I.O.O.F. block was erected in the 1870's, David Johns erected the Lindenfield stores in 1878, the Public Utilities building was erected in the early years of the century, replacing three frame stores, this process continued until the present form of the street was achieved. With one or two major exceptions, such as the removal of the Central Hotel, the buildings have not changed to any marked degree since the early years of this century.

One hundred years ago, however, there were no sidewalks, not even boardwalks which were not constructed until 1876. The street was mud in the spring, dust in the summer and frozen ruts and ice in the winter. Many of the stores had overhanging porches which kept the area in front of the store dry. Hitching posts and rails lined both sides of the business section in front of the stores. In the mid-1870's boardwalks and boardwalk crossings were constructed in the business section. The walk was covered by the overhanging porches in front of the stores. Efforts at gravelling the road were made and the street was watered by a watering wagon. The merchants were charged a frontage levy for the watering of the Main Street. The mud was shovelled away in the spring but the street remained muddy or dusty or rutted, depending on the season until the pavement was laid. A few gas lights were placed on the street in the 1880's and in the 1890's a few electric lamps were located along Main Street. So aside from the buildings, the street's appearance has otherwise changed — the mud, boardwalks, lamps, covered porch areas, hitching posts, the dust and the board crossings have all disappeared. Even the names on the stores have changed. It is difficult to think of more than two names which were on store fronts a century ago and are still on stores, those names are Browning and Sanders. Some of the old Main Street business names can still be found along the street, for example, Southcott and Broderick. Many of the names such as Trick, Currelly, Trimble, Fanson, Carling, Pickard, Samwell, Fitton, Grigg, Brimacombe, Drew, Hawkshaw, Gidley, Acheson, have disappeared from the business section entirely, indeed most of these names are not found in the town at all, although, there are still Achesons and Pickards in the town.

The growth of Exeter's business community from the period 1847 to 1873 was accompanied by a corresponding growth in the

community generally As the growth occurred in both Exeter and Francistown the two villages tended to grow together and were, of course amalgamated in 1873 to form an incorporated municipality called Exeter

The municipal history will be considered elsewhere in this book In this chapter we want to concern ourselves with the industries businesses and general commercial activity The industries will be considered first Industry in the village was concentrated in several areas there was an important group of industries along the river some in Francistown others in the southwest part of Exeter including "Cottletown" others were located along Main Street and near the railway

Little remains of many of these industries For example, the only reminder of industry in the southwest part of town is the name Mill Street and all that indicates the river industrial area is the name Old Mill Road Each of the important industries is briefly described in the following pages

The River Industries

1. McConnell's Grist Mill and Sawmill erected in the 1830's have already been discussed It should be mentioned however that in the late 1850's the mill still called McConnell's Mills was operated by George Hunt and R Webb

2. McLachlan and McCallum — Tannery

   This was started in 1876 on the south side of the river approximately where Mrs. J Elliott's house is now located Mr McCallum was sole owner by the early 1880's By 1899 the Tannery had been enlarged and consisted of a large frame building one hundred feet long with a brick warehouse, office and engine room McCallum employed eight skilled workmen at that time including a Mr Isaiah Hall He shipped his products all over Ontario to Manitoba, the Northwest, and British Columbia In 1912 he gave up the tannery business and in 1920 the tannery was torn down by Tom Elliott who had purchased the property This industry had provided local farmers with a market for hides In addition to local hides the tannery used local hemlock bark as a source of tanning

3. McLennan's Steam and Water Power Flouring and Grist Mill

   This mill was located just east of where the railroad crosses the river today A road ran along the south bank of the river past the tannery to McLennan's Mill In the 1870's G Willis was the chief grain buyer for the mill Dry grain in 1875 was gristed for seven cents per bushel

   Water power for the mill came from a small dam which had

been built by the operators of the mill. Nothing remains today of either the mill or the dam.

A son of McLennan went on to become Professor Sir John McLennan of the University of Toronto. Indeed a number of Exeter boys became involved with the University of Toronto. This is illustrated by a quote from Charles Currelly's book, I Brought the Ages Home. Currelly himself an Exeter boy says:

> About the year 1926 as I was putting on my gown to go on the platform at Convocation Hall T. A. Russell came over to me and said "It's not a bad showing for Exeter is it?" I looked around and saw Professor Ramsay, the Greek scholar and the oldest Exeter boy present; Sir John Willison, writer and Canadian correspondent of the London Times; Brigadier General Mitchell, Head of the Faculty of Applied Science; Professor Sir John McLennan, Russell, himself of the Board of Governors; Martin, the Prime Minister of Saskatchewan, his brother, myself, and two junior members of the staff.

4 The Exeter Steam Bending Factory

This mill was operated by James McNabb and was possibly located in McConnell's old mill since McNabb was there in the early 1860's after McConnell had sold out. Hay rakes, pea harvesters and spinning wheels were produced. The mill had a staff of four men. "Turning done to order" said the advertisements. This mill continued to operate until about 1880.

5 Kilpatrick's Woollen Mill

West of the bridge was a woollen mill operated by George and Ralph Kilpatrick. Opened in 1863, it burned down in 1875. During its operation it employed ten men in the art of carding, spinning, weaving and cloth dressing.

6 The Exeter Woollen Mill

Erected in 1876, this mill was located on the south bank of the river east of the bridge near Pickard's Grist Mill. Operated by Messrs. Wanless and Blain, the mill produced tweeds, blankets and full cloth. In 1880 the village granted the mill a subsidy of $4500. Van Egmond from Seaforth bought it in January 1884 and sold it to B. Muir in October of the same year. Muir shipped wool, blankets, and yarns all over Ontario and the West. He traded his "manufactured goods to wholesale houses in the east receiving in exchange ladies' and gents' underwear, stockings, and all kinds of manufactured wearing apparel." The mill, using local wool, thrived until 1906 when the Muir brothers closed down the operation. It was opened again as the result of the urging of the village council but its revival was short lived.

7. Pickard's Grist Mill, Exeter Mills.

James Pickard either built this mill in the late 1850's or early 1860's near where the present Public Utilities pump house is located, or he purchased the old McConnell mill and improved it. A dam made of wood could have been built by Pickard but it may have been erected earlier by McConnell. "Cap" Howard bought the mill from Pickard and ran it as a saw mill and power plant in the 1890's. After the turn of the century, the mill became a derelict building.

The Old Grist Mill

Cottletown and the Huron Street Industries

1. James Pickard's Steam Saw Mill

This industry, the first steam saw mill in the area, was erected on Huron Street, west of Victoria Park in 1855 by "Boss" Pickard. The importance of the mill to the economy of the area is illustrated by the production figures of 1869. In that year one and one-half million feet of lumber was produced from local timber supplies.

The mill was purchased in 1885 by John Gould to make staves for his cooperage. Gould's cooperage was located on William Street on the site of the present Legion building. In addition to the barrel-making factory Gould also operated an ashery for the production of lye and potash. John later sold the mill to James Gould. John was in business to the early 1860's.

2. The Sutherland and Innis Stave Company

This company purchased the old mill from James Gould in

1899, tore it down and erected two buildings: the sawmill on the south side and the barrel factory on the opposite side. The company opened another plant in Bryanstown at about the same time. In the winter of 1900 the company cut three hundred thousand feet of elm in the Hay Swamp. In 1903 Tom Creech was nearly killed when a saw broke, flying through the air close to Creech and crashing through the wall of the building. By 1904 the elm stock had been so depleted that the company ceased to operate in Exeter and moved their equipment to the Ottawa Valley. The mill was leased for a time by J. H. Gilles from Michigan. Gilles later operated another saw mill in an area north of the canning factory. The building was eventually torn down, and today there is no indication of its existence except for the name Mill Street.

3. Spackman's Cooperage

Typical Upper Canadian small town industries in the 1850's and 1860's included barrel making, soap and lye manufacturing. John Spackman was operating a cooperage and soap-making establishment in the 1850's in Exeter. His cooperage was on Huron Street East between Albert and Edward Streets on the creek, which is now enclosed in a large tile in that part of the town. Like most industries, it utilized local raw materials: the barrels were made from local elm and the soap was made from wood ash diligently gathered from the homes of the village by Davie Gilles. Spackman's little factory was torn down well before the turn of the century. Hugh Spackman, John's son, later operated the hardware store at the corner of John and Main Streets. The Spackman sign is still visible on the brick of what is now the F. A. May and Son store.

4. Cottletown

In the vicinity of the old William Pearce house on Anne

The Sunderland and Innis Sawmill

Street was the manufacturing establishment of George Cottle. Cottle produced wooden harvest tools such as rakes, snathes, grain cradles and fork handles. Ambrose Cottle eventually took over the business and took up residence in the old Pearce house. The factory was located immediately east of the house. Ambrose enlarged the operation by opening the Exeter cider mill shortly before the turn of the century; he made cider, apple butter and jelly. Mr. Cottle acquired one of the first gasoline engines to be used in Exeter to provide power for the turning factory and the cider mill. Ambrose was also one of the first to own an automobile in the village. It was red and had no top.

Cottle sold the two operations to J. A. and William Killough in 1903. The property was later acquired by S. J. V. Cann and he moved the equipment to the old Verity Foundry at the corner of Main and Wellington Streets, about 1920.

The Francistown Industries.

1. G. Bolton's pump factory was on the London Road north of the crossroads in the early 1870's. Other than the fact of its existence, little else is known about this small industry.
2. An apple evaporator operated on the Lake Road for a number of years. It was opened in 1899 by C. Witmer and was later owned by S. M. Sanders, J. Brintnell and A. D. Clapp. The last owner was R. Laing, "The Apple King".
3. The Verity Plough Works

Beginning as a small foundry, this industry grew to become Exeter's most important manufacturing concern. No industry before Verity and only one or two since have employed as many men as Verity employed during the peak years in Exeter. Verity employed between seventy and eighty full time men in the 1890's.

In 1857 William H. Verity, a Yorkshireman, and a Mr. Brabson started the "Francistown Foundry". Verity was a young mechanical engineer in 1857 and was appointed as an inspection engineer on one of the steam driven ships making a maiden voyage, crossing from London to New York in 1857. "On the ship there was a young lady named Mary Jane Fountain. Verity courted her during the crossing and promptly married her in New York when the ship arrived. The couple went to Buffalo and a few months later they moved to Upper Canada settling in Francistown where the Fountains had settled. There Verity entered into partnership with Brabson 'For the manufacture of plows, sugar kettles, horse powers, straw cutters, saw outfits, box and cook stoves'.

During his beginning years, Verity made all his patterns and machinery himself with 'rudimentary equipment" including a drill lathe boring mill vise, and "a horsepower with a gear fifteen feet in diameter ' The power for this "huge contraption was furnished by farmers teams which used to come in twice a week when heats were taken off" Verity eventually bought Brabson out and the firm came to be known as W H Verity and Sons Foundry

Verity s four sons, Robert H William J , Percy E and Charles F all eventually entered the business "Robert and William operated the big hand press which formed the mold boards of the plows The furnace and press were outside in the open beside a creek in which a twenty-foot hole had been dug The hot mold boards were cooled in this little pond In 1869 the firm employed twelve men in the manufacture of Balls Ohio Self Rakers Wood s Reaping Machine, plows other agriculture implements and stoves Verity stopped making stoves in the 1870 s, he sold his stove business to John McCleary of London Twenty years later the firm employed over forty "mechanics' For over thirty years "Canada's Great Plow Maker" operated his business in Francistown The site of this Francistown foundry was at the corner of Alexander and William Streets

In 1889 the Messrs Verity moved their expanding business from Exeter North or Francistown to the corner of Main and Wellington Streets site of the present Liquor store The new works extended from Main Street eastwards to Andrew Street The village council generously granted the firm exemption from taxation in 1889 and the Times approvingly commented on the council s decision saying that "the employees receive good wages the greater part of which is left with our merchants every Saturday A few more manufacturing institutions will place Exeter in the position of which she is so deserving"

After establishing the firm in this new location the Messrs Verity increased their staff to sixty as orders for plows from Manitoba came in In 1889, the Foundry shipped nearly one thousand plows to the West In those days the foreman of the forge was Robert Webster who oversaw the production of the famous Verity plow The next few years saw the business steadily expand to the point where it was the most important industry in the entire area

In 1892 however, the village was disturbed by news that the largest industry in the community was about to close and move to Brantford The Massey Harris firm had made offers to Verity That company wanted Verity to manufacture all of their plows and had given 'The Messrs Verity flattering inducements to locate in either Toronto or Woodstock'

Amalgamation in the spring of 1891 had resulted in the formation of the Massey Harris Company Limited A further amalgamation occurred in December when Massey Harris merged with the Patterson Wisner firm 'Hart Massey was the dominating figure' in the new corporation

The mergers continued however and in 1892 the Massey Harris Company acquired forty percent interest in the Verity Plow Company Mr Verity proposed that his firm remain in Exeter Exeter businessmen raised ten thousand dollars to assist in the expansion of the firm council offered tax exemptions and promised to approach the railroad with a demand that a spur line be built to the works These offers were taken to Massey-Harris by the Veritys who had promised "to take a strong stand in favor of Exeter Unfortunately for Exeter the Verity Works could not be retained and in October of 1892 the last fifteen carloads of machinery had left the Exeter station for Brantford the new location of the Verity Ploughworks In Brantford the firm took over the plant formerly occupied by the Wisner Company The Works were gone and with them many Exeter families It would seem that the major factor in the decision to move was the lack of satisfactory railway service and the need for centralization With the loss of the Works Exeter's growth was seriously restricted indeed the village never recovered from the loss of this industry until the Second World War In addition to the Veritys some of the other families who moved to Brantford were the Rantons Everetts Braunds McKays McLaughlins and many others In all over thirty families left Exeter including over one hundred and fifty people

W H Verity had lived in Exeter for forty years The Verity home was located north of the river about where the motel is now located, it was one of the town's finest houses and "stood on an eminence like some fairy castle in splendid isolation' The Verity home was one of the first in Exeter to have a furnace installed to heat the whole house, this was in 1884 The Veritys were Methodists and Conservatives The family played a major role in the activities of the village With the move to Brantford W H Verity became Vice President of the Verity Plough Company of Brantford, Verity died, however, in late 1892 a short time after the move H A Massey became President Mr Verity was the father of twelve children including Mrs T R Carling and Mrs R E Pickard His son, W J Verity became the general manager and Vice President of the Verity Plough Works and later a Director of the Massey Harris Company and

Vice-President of the Dominion Foundry and Steel Company. R. H. Verity, another son, eventually became General Superintendent of the Massey Harris Company in Toronto. Charles Verity was foreman of the molding room and Percy was Chief Pattern Maker. The Verity Company retained a separate identity for over twenty years. Eventually, however, the Massey Harris and Verity Companies were fully amalgamated in the Massey Harris Company. The Verity family continued to play an important part in the management of this firm. In 1897 "while the plant was working twenty-four hours a day on a rush order for Australia, an explosion occurred in the paint shop resulting in a fire which wiped out the entire works." A new plant was built in Brantford in 1897 and this factory gave Verity the "best equipped plow works in North America."

In 1893 the Verity buildings in Exeter were purchased by the Murray brothers of Wingham, who operated a foundry in the buildings. The Exeter Electric Light and Power Company acquired that section of the Verity building on Main Street and developed a power plant there which provided electricity for the village until 1915 when Ontario Hydro came in. (See the chapter on municipal services for more information on the power company.) In 1913 the Exeter Manufacturing Company was established with a loan of ten thousand dollars from the village of Exeter. This company, founded by W. J. Murray, a Mr. Zeig and a Mr. Hanna, intended to utilize the old foundry building to produce plow points, road drags, cement machinery and other road machinery, did not have any degree of success and ceased operation in 1914 or 1915.

S. J. V. Cann acquired that part of the Verity foundry that had been used as the power plant and established a cider mill in the old building. Cann also operated one of the first gas stations out of this building. The building gradually became derelict and was eventually torn down by the Ontario Government to make room for the liquor store. With the disappearance of this building and its tall chimney, one of Exeter's landmarks was gone. The other Verity buildings to the east were torn down by the canning factory and the materials utilized at the factory. "King" Davis eventually acquired the land and erected houses on the site. Today nothing remains as evidence of the old Verity Ploughworks.

4 Fenwick's Flour and Grist Mill

After attempting to work a "poor sand farm lying along the banks of the Black Creek," Mr. Fenwick, "a severe dyed-in-the-wool Englishman," decided it was time for "his emancipation from his groping, sand-beetle life'. As his son later suggested, Fenwick felt it was time to go to work with his mind instead of with his muscles so he moved his family to Zurich and operated a grist mill and saw mill there for a time. The bigger village of Exeter, however, beckoned him and he packed up his wagon and took his family to Exeter where in 1875 he opened a flour and grist mill on the north west corner of the Francistown crossroads on property owned by Abel Walper. Fenwick's son George describes the family's entry into Exeter as follows:

> Our entry into Exeter during the summer of 1875 behind our span of bays and in a light wagon was a characteristic one for that period. Neither was it attended with any degree of pomp or ceremony. We (us kids) were chattering and exclaiming like a surprised band of caged monkeys. Restraint — an unknown quantity with us — had completely disappeared into the deepest oblivion. For here at last was the promised land, the new haven of our special one, a fruitful field through and by which we could exercise our innocent deviltry. We had completely forgotten the admonition of brother Bill back along the road before entering Hensall when he cautioned:
>
> "Now you kids don't want to look and act like a lot of jayhooks when we reach Exeter. Look and act as if you knew something." Good advice, but about as effective as trying to wash the face of the moon with a cup of water. For, as we rumbled along the road leading into Francistown, there, bulking large in the distance, was Father's new mill — still in the course of construction — which brought forth many yaps and yells and exclamations of astonishment and delight.

The mill was an imposing sight being four stories high. The opening of the mill was celebrated in a grand style in the Walper Hotel saloon which became a favorite haunt of the farmers who brought their grain to Fenwick's mill. After the local gentry received their money from Fenwick for their grain, they crossed the road to spend it in Walper's saloon on "stale beer, cheese and bologna sandwiches".

Fenwick evidently gave James Pickard some stiff competition in the milling business since it is recorded that Fenwick "aroused the anger of The Boss". Until Fenwick's opening Pickard had dominated the milling business in the area.

Fenwick's mill "contrary to all predictions succeeded" and he shipped flour all over Western Ontario and Quebec. The mill's operations were directed by the head miller, August Emric and Tom Pennell, the chief engineer and fireman. He had his own teams and freight wagons for drawing flour to Goderich, Hensall, Seaforth and other surrounding villages. Victor Muthart was one of the drivers.

5 The Flax Mill

This mill was located on the Lake Road west of the Francistown crossroads It was first erected in June 1877 by Messrs Paton and Dorward These gentlemen sold the business to J Sweitzer in the mid 1880's for twenty five hundred dollars Sweitzer had some trouble with a female admirer shortly after he acquired the flax mill In 1886 it was reported in the Times that a lady named Elizabeth Spawn tried to burn the mill down after Sweitzer had refused to marry her Constable Gill had to arrest Elizabeth and send the poor girl to the Goderich Gaol where she was able to spend some time pondering upon her unfortunate love life

The mill used locally grown flax which was pulled by local labor Flax pulling was hard work and in July 1894 the pullers walked out of the fields and struck for higher wages Anarchy in Exeter! The Times was appalled. The editor went so far as to compare the "wicked strikers" to those involved in the recent "Great Strike" in the United States The workers were given a small increase G and J Kellerman who bought the mill in 1900 averted another strike by increasing the pay to the menificent sum of twenty-five cents for a twelve hour day From seven in the morning until seven at night the flax was pulled, tied in sheaves, loaded on wagons and taken to the mill where it was threshed for seed The fibres were then spread on the ground to rot after which the fibrous material was taken to the factory for preparation of the flax fibre

In 1920 the mill burned and William H Johnston who moved to Exeter in 1920 after a teaching career wrote a poem about the flax mill fire; in the poem he describes how the flax mill burned but how the flaxmen "raced and worked and toiled beyond compare" to save the storehouse Johnston wrote how "we hope to see a better mill arise" and in 1921 a new mill was built by the Ontario Flax Company In 1923 Owen Geiger purchased the mill Geiger continued to employ Joseph Davis as mill manager. Davis had managed the mill for over thirty years and had worked for all of the mill owners Davis died in 1961 at the age of 93 Geiger closed the mill in 1930 it was never reopened The last use for the buildings was as storage for Cann's Mills This storage barn still stands

6 Francistown gristmills

John MacDonald and the Hetton Company are listed as the operators in the 1860's This mill may later have been McLennan's Mill

Other Industries and Manufacturing

There were a number of other manufacturing activities worth mentioning. The Gidley Furniture factory was one of Exeter's early industries having been established by Thomas Gidley in 1859. The following is taken from an item in the Times Advocate of June 1, 1944. Harry Gidley, the last of the Gidleys to live in Exeter died that year and the article from which the following is taken was written at that time.

> Thomas Gidley had been a cabinet maker and a member of the cabinet guilds in London, England, and it is on record in the London City Hall that he had repaired the London City gates.
>
> Seeing the great need for household furniture in this new land where tables, benches and bedsteads had all to be made by hand, he started a chair and furniture factory.
>
> Before emigrating to Canada Thomas Gidley had served an apprenticeship of seven years and became a master workman. He brought his tools with him and many of these fine hand working steel and wooden planing and carving tools are in Harry Gidley's shop today.

Thomas Gidley's shop was built in 1859 where the Beaver Lumber Company's buildings now stand. He took his three sons Richard, Charles and Samuel into the furniture business.

> From the beginning they found it difficult to supply the pressing demand for household furniture and the venture proved to be a profitable one."

The Gidleys also built the so called "Oddfellows Block" and Samuel and Charles operated both a furniture and undertaking business there. Harry Gidley is remembered in Exeter for his musical ability and his contribution to Exeter bands; he was leader of the Exeter Brass Band and founder and leader of the Exeter Orchestra. Harry "filled orders for individual hand polished pieces and fancy articles in woodwork for customers in Exeter and from coast to coast. ... Harry made many hand polished coffee tables solid and durable. ... The tops were made of beautiful curly maple that he salvaged from a lumber pile that was about to be used as firewood. The trim on the legs and the inlaid portions of the top were black walnut obtained in Port Franks from George Hurdon, son of the former Exeter banker N. Dyer Hurdon, where it had lain in the bottom of the river for decades."

Furniture made by Thomas Gidley, his sons, and grandsons may be found in various places throughout Canada and the United States.

The Gidleys sold their first place of business in 1888 when they moved to the Oddfellows Block. On the site of this first Gidley fur-

niture factory was established a business which proved to be one of Exeter's most durable. The Ross and Taylor Planing Mill was started in 1876 by the Ross brothers and Davidson. In February 1877 J. W. Taylor joined Ross in the business which was then located on Andrew Street where H. Bishop later built a house. In 1888 the firm purchased the Gidley Bros. Factory and in 1903 the firm built a new brick building on the site and purchased John Willis' lumber yard which was located just across the street. Willis had established his lumber business about 1870. Ross and Taylor continued to expand and in 1905 they constructed a new saw mill and large drying kiln. That was the year that the Sutherland and Innis mill closed. Messrs. Ross and Taylor felt that the village needed a saw mill so they had one erected. It was also in 1905 that the Ross and Taylor Company Limited was incorporated. In that year the company employed ten steady men and several part time employees. The books for 1905 showed five thousand dollars paid in wages, seventeen thousand dollars for stock, and three thousand for freight. The manager of the mill from 1908 to 1931 was J. R. Hind.

In 1931 the business was sold to Messrs. Morse and Gordon by the remaining partner J. W. Taylor. Ross died in 1913. Taylor died in 1933. The business passed through several ownerships including that of Messrs. Henderson and Sweitzer. A. J. Sweitzer erected a new building in 1947. In recent years the business was acquired by the Beaver Lumber Company, this company occupies the site at present.

Shortly after the turn of the century the Conner Brothers Machine Company was opened at the corner of William and Wellington Streets. The Conners manufactured air cooled engines and various other items of a mechanical nature, including railroad velocipedes, the Conner Washing Machine, and at least one automobile. This may have been the only car ever built in Exeter although a man named Kurtze once requested a loan of five thousand dollars from Council in order to erect a motor car plant in Exeter. Nothing, as far as it is known, ever became of this proposal. The Conner car, however, did run, Luther Penhale once took it for a drive and the car heated up so badly that it could not be driven.

In 1920 J. G. "Goldie" Cochrane from Kitchener purchased the Conner Machine Company and operated the business as Cochrane's Machine Shop. Cochrane had an interesting sports background and contributed greatly to sports, particularly hockey, in Exeter. His sports activities are commented on elsewhere in this book. Cochrane's shop was closed before the second war.

A small manufacturing establishment existed at the corner of James and Andrew Streets in the 1870's, Messrs. Funston and

Hillard operated a Carpenter and Joiner Shop there for a number of years. The Heaman Rake and Cradle Factory operated a mile south of the village until it burned in 1884. Richard Manning's Cheese Factory was established fairly early in Exeter's history. Manning was one of the early arrivals, coming in 1855 or 1856. The date that he began operating his factory is not known but it is known that in 1869 this factory manufactured fourteen tons of cheese. Manning had sixty cows in his own stable and no doubt purchased additional milk. In the 1890's The Exeter Butter and Cheese Manufacturing Company a subsidiary of the Davis and Rankin Company of Chicago operated in Exeter. According to one report they claimed to have a one thousand cow capacity. It may be that this company took over Richard Manning's factory although this is not known nor is the location of the factory known. A. Q. Bobier's Creamery was another important dairy products operation in Exeter. Snell Brothers Pork Packing Plant was started in the 1890's in James Pickard's old brick building on James Street. Louis Day came from London to be foreman of the plant.

For several decades the Exeter Roller Mills was one of Exeter's important business concerns. A grist and flour mill was started in 1890 by Messrs. Rollins and Williams. Their mill burned in 1892 and the partners purchased the old Pickard Mill together with the house and adjoining land—the house being the one now occupied as the Ausable Authority Office. A price of one thousand dollars was paid by Rollins and Williams for all of this property. Instead of reopening the old mill, however, Rollins and Williams erected a new mill in 1894 on property purchased from Mr. Hooper on Main Street. They sold the mill to Cobbledick and Sons in 1898 who had been in the grain business. They sold the business to the Harvey Brothers, Thomas, J. S. and W. H. in 1902.

The Harveys renovated the mill, installing three new choppers and began what was to remain a very successful business for many years. By 1906 the mill was flourishing for in that year the Harveys shipped ten thousand sacks of flour to the United Kingdom alone. To meet its production schedule the mill ran day and night. There was a large market for their Welcome Flour, Pure Manitoba Flour and Star Flour throughout Western Ontario as well as other points in Canada and abroad. In addition to using some local soft wheat the mill used thousands of bushels of hard western wheat each year.

This large volume of wheat, which was brought in each year amounted to as much as two hundred and eighty thousand bushels in some years, plus the large shipments of flour going out prompted serious agitation by the mill and the village council for the construction of a railway siding to the mill. It had long been felt in Exeter that the railroad and the station being "far from the leading hotels and places of business was in an "unhandy spot." It will be recalled that it was inadequate railway service that contributed to Verity's move and later the Harveys found the railway service less than adequate. No line was ever built to the mill however.

By the 1930's the mill was beginning to decline. A combination of factors including the death of the original partners, the unsuccessful management by those who followed and perhaps most important the severe competition from the large flour milling concerns, resulted in the eventual closing of the flour mill. It was sold to the Cann family who subsequently have established a prosperous feed mill operation.

Messrs. Dyer, Oke, and Howard operated the Exeter Planing Mill, Sash, Door and Blind Factory which began in the 1860's on Wellington Street. In 1901 the mill burned and at a public meeting following the fire Council was instructed by the ratepayers present to lend the firm six thousand dollars, in order that the mill might be rebuilt. The loan was to be conditional upon the consent of "rival institutions" being forthcoming. The only competitor to give consent was the firm of Ross and Taylor, consequently, the burned mill could not be rebuilt. The creditors had to settle for fifty cents on the dollar.

The Exeter Salt Works began production from a well fifteen hundred feet deep located immediately west of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway near the present canning factory in the 1880's. Among the chief shareholders in the company were W. G. Bissett, T. B. Carling and D. Mills. Most of the salt produced was sold in the immediate area. In 1924 the well was purchased by Mr. Rausford from Clinton who operated it for a few years until the frame building housing the works burned. Today only the tall chimney marks the site of this industrial activity. It is worthy of note that the Salt Company sent an exhibit of salt and brine to the Paris Exhibition and received a diploma for the exhibit.

Other small industries could be mentioned. G. and J. Brooks Carriage Factory, George Davis Marble Works located just north of the Main Street Methodist Church, Hazelwood Brothers — Acetylene Gas Machines are some that come to mind. Eldred Drew, William Drew and John Drew are names that are associated with furniture making in Exeter. The location of the various Drew operations is somewhat confusing and more is said later in the chapter about the Drews but William's shop and store apparently were found where Dinney Furniture is now and Eldred's shop was at the rear of Mace's store on the west side of Main Street. Eldred Drew employed from nine to fifteen men in his cabinet making shop in the 1870's. Israel Smith was Exeter's first bicycle maker. W.

D. Weekes established the Exeter Marble Works in 1878 on the premises now occupied by Pryde Monuments. Weekes was chairman of the Exeter Library Board for twenty years. W. D. Weekes designed a granite monument for a New Brunswick Company to send to the Paris Exhibition early in the century. The monument won a silver medal. There was another Marble Shop operated by George Davis north of Main Street Church; it was torn down in April 1901.

John Trick built carriages, wagons, buggies, sleighs, cutters and did general blacksmithing. He had two buildings on Main Street somewhere south of Ross and Taylor; one building was brick and measured forty two feet by twenty-four feet. The other was frame and was eighty feet long and twenty two feet wide. Trick's shop employed ten men which made it an important village industry from the 1850's when it was established until it was purchased by James Dignan, a former apprentice of Trick's in 1874.

Richard Davis, another blacksmith had a large shop. He began working in Exeter in the late 1850's or early 1860's and eventually built up a business that employed nine men to work his four forges. His shop was at one time located where the post office is now and measured sixty feet by twenty-five feet. The numerous other blacksmiths that had shops in Exeter will be considered in the chapter on transportation. Blacksmith shops are mentioned here because they often were in the small towns and villages of Ontario important manufacturing operations.

Isaac Carling's Tannery which was established on the corner of Anne and Main Street in 1847 remained an operating industry in Exeter for several decades using local hides and local hemlock and oak as a source of tannin.

The Jackson Manufacturing Company was owned by Thomas Jackson of Clinton. He had factories in Seaforth, Goderich, Clinton and Hensall as well as Exeter where the operation was located in James Pickard's old store. The company began in Exeter in 1911 and produced clothing of various kinds, including overalls, suits, overcoats and army trousers during the First World War. G. W. Davis was manager and A. Perritt chief cutter. The clothing appeared under the label 'Lions Brand'. In 1923 the firm was bankrupt and the Exeter branch was purchased by S. M. Sanders. It operated as the S. M. Sanders Manufacturing Company from 1923 to 1929 when Sanders sold the old building to "Sandy" Elliot who used it at that time as a garage and automobile showroom. Elliot still owns the building which now contains apartments and stores including the Canadian Tire Corporation.

An important Exeter industry traces its origins to the year 1887 when J. G. Jones leased the Winchelsea general store from Fred

Godbolt Jones had been a school teacher first at Khiva and then at the Eden school but had decided that there was a better living to be made in business. He operated the Winchelsea store where he developed an extensive dry goods and grocery business as well as establishing an impressive business in poultry and seeds, until 1905 when he moved to Exeter. He purchased E. J. Spackman's stores on the corner of Main and John Streets. In 1908 he expanded southwards and purchased Farmer's grocery business which was located where Smythes Shoe Store is now. Jones established a seed milling plant in this building. Jones purchased the Farmer liquor store in 1915; this frame building had been the old Bible Christian Church and was by 1915 becoming dilapidated. Jones moved this building to the rear of his stores and housed poultry there. He erected the brick building which is now the Town Clerk's office. By 1915 Jones owned the land and buildings from John Street south to the bank.

J. G. Jones died in 1927 and his son Hubert expanded the seed business to the point where in 1947 a new modern seed mill was erected on John Street on property acquired from J. G. Dow. This property had been the site of the well known horse barns operated by McDonnell and Bawden and later Dow. Hubert Jones had been joined by C. S. MacNaughton and the new seed business was called The Jones and MacNaughton Seed Company. The company thrived for about twenty years and was eventually sold. As a result of various transactions the business is now owned by the Maple Leaf Milling Company. Further comments are found on later pages about other Jones businesses.

Other manufacturing activities in Exeter included such pioneer industries as the shipping of leached ashes and the shipping of ice from the river. The Times noted on February 2, 1888 that "the ice on the river is very thick and of good quality. The hotels and others are at present engaged in putting away a supply for summer's use."

This brief summary of Exeter's past industrial and manufacturing activity indicates a number of interesting facts. It demonstrates that a small Ontario town had a considerable variety of manufacturing. This variety reveals the degree of local self sufficiency that existed since a small town like Exeter did manufacture a great list of items such as agricultural tools, wagons, furniture, salt, flour and so on. Agricultural products were processed in the village which was the local market centre. It is also noteworthy that in the last half of the nineteenth century industrial activity in Ontario was decentralized and spread over the towns and villages of the province. Naturally the less complete transportation network contributed to this but so did the absence of as many large corporations. The small entrepreneur characterized the small towns. In Exeter the industries noted on the previous pages were mainly small operations. The Verity Plough Company did grow to become a good sized industry and the founder W. H. Verity and his sons did become important figures in the industrial history of Ontario. Most small manufacturers did not, however, achieve the level of success of the Verity company. In Exeter many of the concerns noted provided a good living for their owners and contributed to the economy of the village providing a variety of employment opportunities. Few of the industries established in Exeter exist at the present time having succumbed to the centralizing trend in Ontario, to the changing technology and to the competition of the large corporation.

One industrial operation which has survived in Exeter for many decades, however, is the canning factory. Today this is Exeter's largest industrial activity and can show almost continuous operation since its beginning in 1906. In that year the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company was established. The company was started initially as a result of Reeve A. Q. Bobier's leadership in getting the factory started. It is true that both the Times and the Advocate had been urging for years that Exeter obtain a canning factory and it is also true that a man named Wagner had started a small cannery in 1904. However it was Reeve Bobier who must be credited with providing the initial stimulus. Bobier interested a group of local businessmen in the idea of a canning factory and then he convinced Council to lend ten thousand dollars to the group to provide additional capital to get the factory built. The ratepayers approved a loan for the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company by a vote of three hundred and thirty seven to twenty seven and the Directors of the Company received the ten thousand dollar loan from the village.

Shares were sold at twenty-five dollars each to local businessmen with most of the shares being purchased by the following men who formed the first Board of Directors; these were Joseph Snell, who was manager of the Sovereign Bank, R. G. Seldon, J. G. Jones, S. Martin, J. Hunter, C. H. Sanders, W. D. Sanders, Thomas Harvey and A. Marchand. The company first bought Wagner's small cannery and redeemed for thirty dollars each the two hundred shares which Wagner had sold. A site was then selected for the factory. The site selected was the property at the rear of John Mitchell's Temperance House near the Railway on Wellington Street. The company also purchased the Mitchell Temperance Hotel and removed the building using the salvaged material to erect two storage sheds. The new factory building was one hundred and seventy feet by forty feet, the boiler room's chimney was twenty five feet high. The contractors were G. Heaman and J. Jewell. Production began in 1906 or 1907 under the management of "chief processor" C. F. Seawright who left in 1911 to go to Philadelphia. In that year S. M. Sanders took over as manager. The first brand canned was "Excelsior Peas" which were packed in some of the first "sanitary cans" used in Canada; these new cans were introduced in 1912. The peas grown locally were purchased from the growers for one and one-half cents per pound.

By the 1920's the ownership of the firm was concentrated in the hands of various members of the Sanders family; as a result the Board of Directors was largely composed of Sanders. There were several Sanders families in Exeter. William Sanders was one of the early arrivals in Exeter; another was Samuel Sanders Sr. who also came quite early to Exeter from Devonshire. Both acquired land on the west side of Exeter, Samuel farming on the west edge of town for some years. Samuel raised a family of four sons and four daughters; the sons were Samuel M., W. D., D. B., and J. A. The first two named played prominent roles in the affairs of Exeter for many years. When old Sam died in February, 1917, at the age of eighty-two it was remarked in the Advocate that "one after another the pioneer residents are passing to their rest, leaving only the lustre of their untarnished names and the example of their lives for the guidance and emulation of the younger generation."

Three of Samuel's sons, W. D., J. A., and S. M. became major shareholders in the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company and were Directors of the Company. The other four Directors in the 1920's were C. H. Sanders and R. N. Creech of the Advocate, F. W. Gladman and L. H. Dickson. Of the seven Directors named above only six were shareholders and these six held all of the shares of the Company.

In 1923 the Board made the decision to sell the Company to the Canadian Canners Limited of Hamilton. Luther Penhale was named manager in 1924. Penhale had various schemes in addition to his immediate job of managing the factory. For example, one year he had thirty tons of wild strawberries harvested in the area and shipped to Hamilton for processing. Penhale eventually assumed a supervisory role with the Canadian Canners. Over the years the other managers of the local factory have been B. R. Bartow, John Bales, E. J. Green, H. K. Penhale, D. Graham and J. Urquhart the present manager. These men have supervised the factory's operations which have included the processing of peas, corn, carrots, sauerkraut, tomatoes, apples, pears and asparagus.

In 1943 the factory was rebuilt by contractor Roy Dewar and in 1944 a pipeline was built from the Exeter dam to the factory. In the 1950's the Morrison Dam was built under the direction of the Ausable Conservation Authority and supported strongly by the

Town of Exeter because it guaranteed the Canning Factory a steady supply of river water for cooling and washing. The town also constructed a filtration plant to filter the water going to the factory. With these expenditures having been made the town was understandably concerned in 1958 when it was rumored that the factory would close and the rumors appeared to be true when the factory did not operate during the 1958 canning season. It appeared that the famous Aylmer label might not be shipped again from Exeter. The factory had provided an important market for local agricultural products and provided employment to the community.

In 1959 it was announced that the California Packing Company had acquired the controlling interest in Canadian Canners Limited. It was with relief that Exeter learned that the new company would not only reopen the Exeter plant but also planned a program of improvement and modernization. A number of improvements, enlargements and additions have since been made to the factory which continues to operate as a branch of Canadian Canners having added to the traditional Aylmer label the California company's Delmonte brand.

So since 1906 this industrial operation has been an important contributor to the economy of the area. There are few people left who worked for the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company when it started in 1906, one of these is Mr. J. Elliott who worked for the old company in 1906 and who was employed in the factory for well over fifty years. Since this was written Mr. Elliott has died.

In addition to the canning factory there have been many businesses and industries in Exeter which are directly related to agriculture. Indeed, the real economic base of the town has always been agriculture. Some other business activities in Exeter whose basis was agriculture are noted below. W. H. Levitt operated a produce business on Main Street north of where the I.G.A. is now. Levitt dealt in butter, eggs, feathers, vegetables and other produce. This business was eventually acquired by W. C. Allison and after that by Canada Packers. Seth Winer's turnip plant, Wein Brothers, Exeter Rutabaga Company, Exeter Produce, various hatcheries, farm implement and machinery dealers further illustrate the agricultural base. Mention was made previously of various cheese and butter processors, other creamery operators in Exeter were A. Q. Bobier, W. G. Medd, William Hatter, N. Stanlake. Today only the Exeter Dairy processes milk in Exeter.

Also associated with the processing and marketing of agricultural products were such people as W. Hardy, and J. Cobbledick, grain buyers. Cobbledick had an office where Johnson's motor repair shop is now. Cobbledick bought grain from the farmers who gathered in the area directly across the road. One amusing incident about Cobbledick's office concerns the time that someone, probably Lancelot Hardy, put a cow in Cobbledick's office one night. When Cobbledick opened up in the morning he found an incredible shambles; he was furious and immediately blamed Hardy who, of course, denied doing it.

We mentioned A. Q. Bobier who dealt in eggs, butter, sugar beets and other produce. His large creamery began operating in 1896 and it is recorded that in 1898 he shipped thirty thousand pounds of butter worth ten thousand dollars to Dawson City. Bobier owned land, produced livestock and was generally one of the village's successful businessmen. He served on Council for a number of years. Bobier left Exeter before World War One and died in 1922 in Buffalo.

The horse trade was a major business in Exeter for decades. One of the most widely known horse dealers was William Bawden who also was an early Reeve of the village. Bawden migrated from Devonshire to Exeter in 1858. He and A. McDonnell imported horses from Scotland, Belgium and France for over thirty years. Bawden made thirty eight trips to Europe to buy horses. William Bawden died appropriately enough in his buggy on October 13, 1913; his horse took him home. The Bawden McDonnell barns were on John Street where the seed plant now stands. These premises saw "some of the finest horses ever to come to Canada." J. G. Dow later operated the barn. Bissett, Handford and others were also active in the horse trade which will be more fully treated in the chapter dealing with transportation.

In commenting on the agricultural basis of the village a word should be said about the farmers' markets. There were several locations in Exeter which served as a market. The first plan of Exeter, which we noted previously was prepared in 1855, left a block which on later maps was designated as the Market Square. This block is now Victoria Park. Information regarding its market function is sketchy; it did not apparently function very long for it is noted in early papers that it became a fenced pasture area for cattle and eventually became overgrown. In the 1890's Joseph Acheson and some others donated the area to the Village. Apparently Acheson was instrumental in having the area cleaned up and having trees planted. The park was once called Jubilee Park and then Victoria Park. There was also a farmers' market, for a time, near the Town Hall. It was opened every Saturday morning in the 1890's. A farmers' grain market was located on the corner of Main and Wellington where in 1877 wheat sold for one dollar and seventy five cents to two dollars and sixty cents a bushel. The price of wheat sixty years later in Exeter was sixty cents per bushel and is now about

two dollars and twenty-five cents. We should also add that suppliers of farm machinery have been important Exeter businessmen from the days of Verity and W. J. Bissett's Deering Harvesting Company agency to the present.

One last example will summarize the important relationship between the village and the agricultural community. The following statistics are for the period Monday, November 6, 1890 to Thursday of the same week. During these four days the following shipments were made from the Exeter Station on the London, Huron and Bruce Railway. The Exeter Milling Company shipped several loads of flour. A. Q. Bobier shipped several carloads of turnips to the United States. R. S. Laing "The apple king" shipped three hundred and twenty barrels of apples, H. Willert shipped two carloads of lambs, and a carload of horses; several carloads of poultry and eggs were also shipped. This was not unusual; these shipments illustrate how active the Exeter Station was in the shipment of agricultural products. It was noted, for example, in February, 1913 that during the preceding year four hundred and sixty tons of butter had been shipped from the three creameries: Exeter, Winchelsea and Centralia. It was also reported in the same month that 55 car loads or 1400 tons of sugarbeets had been shipped from the Exeter Station.

We have been concerned up to this point with the different kinds of manufacturing and processing activities that have been found in Exeter. There were a good many other business concerns and it is to these which were mostly found on the Main Street that we want to turn.

Exeter's business affairs were chronicled by the weekly newspaper. The doings of Main Street, the churches, the social events, the sports, the births and deaths, in short every aspect of life was covered in the pages of the weekly paper. The first paper to be established in the village was "The Times." This paper began in August, 1873. Within two years it had over nine hundred subscribers. The founder, publisher and editor was John White, a staunch Conservative, who pulled no punches when it came to letting the "Grits" have a blast of his hostility. White did indeed follow his own motto which appeared on his paper's front page each week: "Hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may." White's first office and printing shop was located in a frame building on Main Street across from Molson's Bank which was then located in a building south of the store presently occupied by Dinney's Furniture Store. The paper moved to its present location in the 1880's. Thomas M. White who helped John on the Times later started the St. Marys Journal and in 1881 the Windsor Review.

Perhaps the most famous individual ever to be associated with the 'Times' was Sir John Willison. Willison was born in Hills Green in 1856. Sometime in 1873 or 1874 Willison left home and eventually headed south along the London Road. Upon reaching Exeter he looked around for work and ended up in the employ of John White as a "Printer's devil" at a salary of twenty five dollars per year. A few days after beginning his employment, Willison wrote an article describing his walk from Hills Green to Exeter. The idea was that the piece should appear in 'The Times'. White's son was favourably impressed and suggested to his father that the piece should be printed and that young Willison should do some more writing. John White said no. Willison was a 'printer's devil' and no more. The young John Willison realizing that his talents were not appreciated in Exeter left clandestinely a few nights later by climbing out his bedroom window above the shop. He moved on to London where he worked for the 'London Advertizer'. In the 1880's he went to the "Globe" in Toronto where he rose to become editor-in-chief and one of Canada's major political journalists. He became a close friend of Sir Wilfred Laurier. In 1913 he was awarded a knighthood. Willison in his "Reminiscences" recalls his two weeks with the "Times". It is not every Ontario weekly that can claim association with such ranking journalists as Willison. J. M. Southcott later was pleased to be able to write about Willison's brief apprenticeship with 'The Times'.

From 1873 to 1906 the 'Times' was a White family enterprise with John White being the publisher and editor until his death in 1900. At that time Millar White became editor and publisher with the able assistance of his sister Matilda. Millar died in 1902 after suffering serious injuries in a fall on the ice while on his way to church. Matilda and J. J. White carried on the publication of the 'Times'.

In 1906 the Whites purchased the "Crediton News" and "The Dashwood Pioneer" from F. J. Wickwire. The Exeter Times Printing Company was formed as a stock company with J. J. White as President. The other officers were J. G. Stanbury, Vice-President, and Wickwire, Secretary. In 1909 White retired and J. G. Stanbury became President. Mel Southcott the diminutive "printer's devil" of only seven years previous purchased White's shares. Southcott purchased Wickwire's shares in 1911 and became editor and manager of the company at a salary of sixty five dollars per month. By 1941 J. M. Southcott had acquired all of the capital shares of the Exeter Times-Advocate, the Advocate having amalgamated with the Times in 1924, just two years after the company had acquired the Hensall Observer from Wickwire.

On June 9, 1887 Thomas Passmore took over as the publisher of Exeter's second newspaper. He published the first issue of the "Exeter Advocate" on that date in his offices at the corner of John and Main Streets. Passmore was actually continuing a second paper in the village rather than starting a new venture since the "Exeter Reflector" had been published from 1877 to 1887. The "Reflector" was founded by Dr. H. M. Cowen and later edited and published by George Moir, a former principal of the St. Marys Public School. The "Reflector" was Conservative and Anti Temperance. Moir gave up the newspaper in 1887 and the equipment was taken over by Passmore who named the paper the "Advocate".

The "Advocate" was to be diametrically opposite in its principles to the "Reflector", since, as Passmore wrote, "the paper will be conducted on Reform Principles and will give that Party hearty support." Passmore deserved credit for his courage in publishing a Liberal journal in opposition to the Conservative "Times" in Conservative Exeter. Passmore also wrote that his paper would be "the worthy exponent and advocate of that Great Movement Prohibition." The Liberal Advocate lasted only six months. In January 1888 Passmore sold out to William Sanders who wrote in the first issue to be published under his management that "we wish to be distinctly understood that this paper will be strictly conducted upon a purely Conservative basis." So Exeter again had two Conservative papers and this was to remain the situation until the Whites gave up the "Times" to Southcott and Stanbury who were both Liberals and gave moderate support to that party, although the "Times" did not become as vehemently Liberal as it had been Conservative. Further discussion of the political nature of the newspapers may be found in the chapter on politics.

The "Advocate" was printed in the offices at the corner of John and Main Streets until 1890 when it moved to the location where Sanders grocery store is now found. George Manson took over the former office and sold boots and shoes there. The Advocate remained in the Sanders family until its amalgamation with the Times in 1924. In that year C. H. Sanders and his associate R. N. Creech gave up the newspaper. Creech, incidentally, lived to the ripe age of eighty-five, dying in 1960. He had taught school at Sharon, had been an associate with C. H. Sanders in the Advocate, was involved with the canning factory and made an important contribution to the life of Exeter as a member of the Board of Education for thirty seven years, as chairman of the hospital board and a member of many other organizations. Further comment on Mr. Creech is found in other chapters. His wife was Edith Sanders.

Consequently, since 1924 Exeter had only one newspaper to chronicle its affairs. The Exeter Times Advocate since 1941 has been entirely owned and operated by the Southcotts Politically the paper is officially independent but from about 1909 to 1950 or so it did give moderate support to the Liberal party For the past twenty odd years however the paper has tended to support the local Conservative candidates

In 1962, J M Southcott completed sixty years in newspaper work and in 1963 was named "Weekly newspaper man of the year
J M Southcott died in 1969 leaving the management of The Exeter Times-Advocate to his son Robert Southcott The paper is one of the province's best weeklies and the printing establishment is one of the most modern in Western Ontario

In addition to the weekly paper which was, of course the official source of news on "Main Street" there were the barber shops of the village On a Saturday night the barber shops were especially active and were open until very late, perhaps ten or eleven o clock as the villagers and the farmers gathered to talk and get trimmed up for Sunday Those were the

> "days of the old hitching posts,
> dusty, gravelled Main Street
> coal oil lamps on top of posts
> situated at the corners of the
> street, that had to be cleaned
> and refilled each day by Town Constable
> James Creech Then came the carbon
> electric lights in the centre of the streets
> The carbons came together in a glass
> covering and the sparks from the carbon
> created a brilliant light These lights
> came on at dusk and were out at midnight"

These were also the days when the stores opened everyday at seven or eight in the morning and closed at nine or ten in the evening and on Saturday at twelve midnight or later

The saloons in the hotels, the stores, the barbershops were busy on a Saturday night The streets were crowded with horse drawn vehicles and bicycles Boys ran up and down the streets, people shopped and gossiped Saturday night in an Ontario small town was the most exciting time of the week Today Exeter is dormant on Saturday night As was mentioned the barber shops were centres of village news. One of the early barbers in Exeter was E Fish who opened his shop in 1875 and carried on his trade until 1906 The shop was located where Wuerth's store is presently located

Castor Willis took over the Fish barber shop in 1906 having served his apprenticeship with Fish Ed Willis took over after Castor Another early shop was the "Central Barber Shop and Tonsorial Parlor" Charles Manning operated this shop until 1888 when he left Exeter for Dodge City in search of adventure There is

no record, however, of his ever shaving Marshall Dillon! Ike Dearing took over this shop which was one door north of the Central Hotel.

The shop in the basement of what is now Bell and Laughton's law office was operated first by A. Hastings. He called it the "Exeter Barber Shop" and advertised "shaving and hair cutting in the latest styles of the art." This shop was operated over the years by Frank Boyle, Elmore Harness, 'Chub' McCurdy, but Hastings was probably the most colorful in that he enjoyed a close relationship with John Barleycorn; when under the influence, the quality of his conversation went up but evidently one could not say the same for the quality of his haircuts. It is likely that he gave some of his shaving customers a fright as he wielded the razor. The shop was the headquarters of Exeter's baseball and hockey experts when it was being operated by Frank "Derry" Boyle.

Haircut prices a few decades ago were twenty five cents for adults, fifteen cents for children, shaves were fifteen cents. Many customers had their own shaving mugs on the shelf of the shop.

In many ways the typical Exeter businessman was the general merchant. Every Ontario small town had the general merchant. Frequently he became the town's most well-to-do businessman. Many of them had various business interests. In Exeter a number of names come to mind of men whose basic enterprise was the store but who had other businesses as well.

In Exeter the first two names obviously are Isaac Carling and James Pickard. Other storekeepers who come to mind are Joseph

Exeter's Main Street fifty years ago
Note the Central Hotel in the foreground

This scene of Exeter's Main Street looks south along the east side of the street.

Acheson, Richard Pickard, George Samwell, R.E. Pickard, T. B. and W. J. Carling, George Mace, Farmer Brothers, and Jones and May. There are a number of others who will also be mentioned in the following pages which deal with the stores and businesses of Exeter's Main Street.

As we have already noted the first three stores to be established in Exeter were Isaac Carling's general store, Joseph Acheson's shoe making establishment, and James Pickard's store which eventually became the largest store in the village. James Pickard as we previously noted had come to this area about 1852, he first established a small store somewhere along the third concession of Usborne Township. A short time later he moved to Exeter where he soon constructed his large store. Pickard as we noted had a number of enterprises, he built a sawmill and a grist mill as well as the store. He farmed land on the east side of Exeter and raised livestock including the production of the largest steer ever seen in the area. "General Pickard" weighed three thousand eight hundred and forty pounds and was thirteen and one-half feet long. Pickard sold the steer to buyers in Berlin (Kitchener).

His big store was Exeter's "Old Reliable House" and occupied all of the big building on Main Street south of James Street. Incidentally, the name of the street is for James Pickard. This store sold all types of goods and occupied the three floors of the building. In 1889 the store had forty six employees in hardware, tin shop, groceries, dry goods, millinery, tailor shop and other areas. Some of these employees were Wes Creech, Will Folland, W. H. Moncur, D. Tait, J. Bissett, G. Sheere, William Creech, Will Quance, to name only a few. There were ten young ladies employed in the store in cluding Miss Weekes, Miss Eacrett, Miss Vosper, and Miss Down. Another Pickard employee was Frank Tom who left Exeter in 1887; he went to Ohio where he eventually was elected to the Senate as a Republican. His brother J. E. Tom was a school inspector in Huron County for many years. Pickard also employed other men as teamsters, one of these was Frank Gill.

The building now occupied by the Exeter Furniture Company was James Pickard's warehouse. The building may have been built in the late 1850's or early 1860's and since Pickard's time it has been used as a pork packing plant, a horse barn (Tom Handford), a garage (Kernick and Pilon), a turnip plant (S. Winer), a truckers' garage (Bagshaw), a furniture plant (Jensen and McCaffrey). Sam Sanders owned the building for many years.

Sid Davis Feed Store

It was James Pickard together with Isaac Carling and one or two others who had the first village plan prepared in 1855. There are arguments over who gave Exeter its name. It was suggested in the Times that Carling "although a Yorkshireman christened Exeter", the more likely possibility, however, is that James Pickard having come from Devon and knowing that the settlement was dominated by Devon men selected the name. It was Pickard and Carling who also led the move for Exeter's incorporation as a village. Pickard was one of Exeter's leading citizens for over fifty years and people talked about his widespread business activities referring to him as "Storekeeper Pickard" or "Farmer Pickard" or "Miller Pickard" or "Boss Pickard" depending on the circumstances. In addition to the store, the sawmill, the grist mill and the farmland, Pickard also had two large stables on the land about where the high school is now. He owned most of the land on the east side of Main Street at one time or another; he bought grain also. He owned several houses including a large one where Snell Brothers is now located. This large house was the place where many of Pickard's employees from the store boarded. Mrs. Pickard fed them, no small feat since their numbers were large.

Pickard opened stores in the late 1880's in Seaforth, Blenheim and St. Marys. So as we note Pickard was involved in virtually every type of enterprise that characterized rural Western Ontario during the last half of the 1800's. He must be classed as one of this area's leading businessmen.

It was surprising and shocking, then, to the people of Exeter to read in the Times of November 7, 1889 the following item:

> "It is with regret we announce the financial failure of Mr. James Pickard, the oldest merchant in Exeter. Mr. Pickard had been in straightened circumstances for years. . . . On Wednesday last the final role was enacted by his assigning in trust to Mr. George Samwell for the benefit of his creditors whose claims aggregate a sum over one hundred thousand dollars. . . ."

Pickard had over-extended himself, particularly in the purchasing of large stocks for the store. The opening of the stores in the other towns was done in an effort to move some of the large stock of merchandise. His properties were sold. A. J. McTavish took over the store and J. N. Howard bought the grist mill, house, dam and surrounding property.

"Boss" Pickard lived out his remaining years in the house on the southwest corner of James and Andrew Streets. He died in 1904 at the age of eighty three. It has been suggested that Pickard built the large house on James Street for his son-in-law Nelson Hooper. It is thought that lawyer R. H. Collins acquired the home when Pickard went into bankruptcy. After Collins died in 1900 the house became the property of Samuel Sanders who had previously lived in the Southcott house on the corner of James and Andrew Streets. Mr. Ralph Sweitzer acquired the house about 1960 and renovated it; it is now a nursing home.

James Pickard was a Conservative in politics, and a Methodist in religion. He married twice, first to Elizabeth Welsh and secondly to Mrs. George Harwood. There are no members of James Pickard's family now living in Exeter. For an unlettered, rural

Devonshire boy (It was reported that Pickard could barely read and write) he did very well in the world

Richard Pickard and George Samwell opened a large store in 1872 on the corner where F A May and Sons store is now located Both of these men had come to Exeter from Devonshire George Samwell was born in Plymouth in 1832 and had migrated to New York in 1854 He subsequently moved to Exeter to work for James Pickard Samwell was a Liberal and a Presbyterian His large house (presently owned by A Johnson) and grounds on John Street occupied most of the block Samwell was married twice — first to a Miss Trick and in later years to Mrs Ann McLeod who outlived George who died in 1906 Ann died in 1918 at the age of ninety one William Kernick bought the Samwell house after Ann died

Richard Pickard, a brother of James was born in 1829 in Ringsast Parish Devonshire, he migrated to Canada in 1849 He entered the employ of James Pickard upon arriving in Exeter Richard married Phoebe Elston in 1864 The Elstons had migrated to Exeter from Morchard Bishop Devonshire in 1855 Miss Elston later commented that Exeter had only fourteen houses in 1855 Richard and Phoebe had six children, Robert E, Richard Jr Dr Edward, Herbert G Jean and Mrs W J Verity Robert E Pickard who was born in 1867 was the father of C V Pickard and Allen Pickard two well known Exeter citizens Richard Pickard was a Liberal and a Methodist the Times described him as 'a friend to the poor and needy

These two men, then opened a large store in 1872 The store eventually found it necessary to employ as many as forty clerks to handle their large trade "The firm by honourable dealing and good value gained the confidence of the people." The store handled a large stock of dry goods which were under Mr R Seldon's charge In addition the other usual general merchandise items were carried including fancy millinery A new millinery showroom was opened in 1884 under Miss McIntyre's supervision Some of the attractions in millinery in 1884 included "shell pink otto silk orleans bonnets" "Tuscao Silk La Geocanda", 'Princess bonnet in Eugenia la blue satin" Styles displayed at the opening were Toronville, Belle Cole, Fatigne and Tulette sunshades, West Point Marcella Dndette but the soubrette and Bellordere were the centre of the admiring throng". Miss McIntyre the 'manageress of the Millinery Department' also had French silks kid gloves and many other items

In the winter of 1889 the partnership was dissolved with Samwell withdrawing but as the Times noted "the business will be carried on in all of its usual magnitude" by Richard Pickard The store had between thirty and forty employees at the time and they made a presentation to Mr Samwell At the 'Great Dissolution Sale' there were many bargains such as Ladies' English Walking Jackets at three dollars and twenty-five cents, Ladies' Gloves from five cents Corsets were twenty cents and up Men's overcoats were four dollars, twelve pounds of tea sold for one dollar. The business known as R Pickard and Son carried on until 1898 when Richard died His son, Robert E carried on the Robert Pickard Company Robert had worked for the store since the 1880's The business was moved from the corner store which was taken over by E J Spackman who also took over the store to the south from Hugh Spackman Spackman operated one store as a dry goods store and the other as a grocery It was Spackman who put in the archway connecting the two stores and in 1899 he had the sign, which is still visible painted on the north wall of the store

Robert Pickard built the store which now houses the Chainway store and carried on business there he also had stores in Hensall and Dashwood for a short time. Some Pickard prices in 1901 are listed below

clothes pegs one cent per dozen
baking soda 5 cents for two pounds
tea was twenty cents a pound
Men's tweed suits were thirteen dollars
blankets were ninety five cents
cotton was five cents per yard
figs were twenty five cents for six pounds

In 1903 R E Pickard sold the business to Bennett and Snell It soon after became Snell and Rowe. The Times hoped "for the fruition of their most sanguine expectations Robert Pickard then migrated west to Frobisher, Saskatchewan with his wife the former Elizabeth Verity and family He remained there until 1925 Robert died in the family house on John Street in 1934 and a scant four days later his wife died The name Pickard then was important on Main Street from James' arrival in 1852 for the next fifty years C V Pickard continued to keep the Pickard name on Main Street from the 1930's to the early 1960's

Another native of Morchard Bishop Devon was William Drew who reached London, Ontario in 1849 There, cholera claimed the lives of his father, mother and two sisters William and four other members of the family walked up the London Road to Exeter in 1854 Drew a carpenter built many of the early frame houses in the village, he also built the Commercial Hotel about 1860 and operated it for twelve years after which he sold the hotel to John Hawkshaw Drew's brother, Eldred, operated a cabinet making shop Eldred left Exeter for California Drew also developed a furniture and undertaking business which was later sold by John Drew to R. N. Rowe who operated the business for many years before it was taken over by R. Dinney. It is reported that Drew suggested the name "The Times" to John White when he opened the newspaper office in 1873. Drew was twice married first to Miss Bawden and then to Mary Holman. Drew died at the age of eighty-six in 1914.

"The Carling store was one of the real pioneer cracker barrel stores with a large wood stove around which the problems of the day were thoroughly discussed." It was noted also that "The Carling store was the centre of the Tory party" in Exeter. The original Carling store was a frame struoture built in 1847 by Isaac Carling. Isaac later built a brick block, where Beavers Hardware was located, to house his general store and it was this store being described in the quotation above. The original store building was left standing as a warehouse until the Dickson and Carling building, which is now the Bell and Laughton building was erected.

Isaac Carling sold dry goods, groceries, wines, liquors, and other general merchandise. One of the Carlings' advertisements in 1878 revealed Carling's political interests. The advertisement noted that

> "The National Policy having
> triumphed at the polls
> Isaac Carling is prepared to give
> his customers the benefits
> that will accrue from its adoption."

The business was sold in 1912 by W. J. Carling, the last Carling to own the store, after sixty five years of operation under the Carling name. The new owner was B. Bedford of Brighton. W. J. Carling and his family moved to Brighton. In later years the store became a Chinese Cafe and later Beavers Hardware.

Another Main Street building which has been a landmark on the street for one hundred years is the building presently occupied by Gould and Jory. The building was built in the 1860's by C. Eacrett whose harness shop occupied the south part of the building. In the north part of the building was Ranton Brothers general store. A century or more ago there were three frame stores immediately north of Rantons, where the Public Utilities building now stands. These stores were John McInnis' flour and feed store which was later George Hyndman's store, Dan Dyer's printing and novelty shop, and Miss Crocker's millinery. South of Ranton was of course Eacrett's then B. S. O'Neil's Bank where the law office is now; above the bank was the dental office of Dr. Kinsman. South of O'Neil's bank was a hardware, Dr. Browning's Dominion Medical Laboratory and J. P. Clarke.

In the late 1880's or 1890's Rantons was taken over by J. A. Stewart. He called the store 'The Big Bankrupt Store' and he specialized in buying up the stock of bankrupt businesses. One of his advertisements said that a lady had been found wandering around blind on Main Street, her blindness having been induced by the very low prices of white wool blankets at the Big Bankrupt Store the prices had "knocked her silly". Stewart expanded the store into the south section; he sold groceries, dry goods, boots, shoes and other goods. In the 1890's he had boys' oxfords for eighty-seven cents, ladies' lace boots for one dollar and seventeen cents and one dollar and twenty-seven cents. Stewart lived a block from the store on the south east corner of John and Andrew Street. He died in 1950 at the age of ninety. Two of the Stewarts' clerks in the early years of this century were T. O. and H. O. Southcott. In those years Southcott's wages were one dollar and fifty cents a week. After working at other jobs the Southcott brothers purchased in 1919 the dry goods business of B. W. F. Beavers which was then situated in the store now occupied by Lindenfields. In 1926 the Southcotts purchased J. A. Stewart's store and operated the business until the early 1950's when it was acquired by Messrs. Gould and Jory.

Southcotts have been represented on the Main Street of Exeter since the late 1850's when John Southcott opened a grocery store. Charles Southcott had a tailor shop; both John and Charles also had various other types of businesses in the 1860's and 1870's. William Southcott built the block at the corner of John and Main Street but later he had financial troubles and other difficulties. William's wife, Christy Ann, a daughter of Thomas Oke, operated a dress making establishment with eighteen employees. Christy Ann was the mother of H. O. and T. O. mentioned above and the mother of J. M. Southcott who as we have noted owned the newspaper. The paper as we also noted is still operated by the Southcotts. Charles Southcott and his son George were the first Southcotts to become involved with the Grand Bend property known as Southcott Pines. So for nearly one hundred and twenty-five years Southcotts have been associated with the business activities of Exeter.

The name "Jones and May" was associated with Exeter's Main Street for many decades. It was noted in previous pages how J. G. Jones began to do business in Exeter. In 1908 William May joined Jones and a few years later Fred A. May joined the firm. Jones' wife was Lavina May and the two Mays were her nephews. When Hubert Jones took over in 1927 he and the Mays continued the extensive dry goods and grocery business. Jones and May were one of the first stores in Exeter to install a telephone; the number was thirty two until dials were installed. The dry goods business is carried on by W. May and the grocery business by H. Holtzmann.

C. B. Snell was one of Exeter's leading entrepreneurs from the 1890's to 1929 when he died. Snell was Reeve at the time of his death, he was seventy-seven years old. Charles B. Snell and his brother George operated a butcher business in the 1890's, they expanded the meat business and established a Pork Packing Plant in the old Pickard building on James Street. He was associated with Tremaine and Zneffle in establishing the steam generating plant which produced electricity for Exeter for about twenty years.

Snell built many houses in Exeter, including the old Creech house on the corner of John and Andrew Streets where he lived himself for some years. He erected other houses on Andrew Street in the vicinity of Exeter South's first school. Snell demolished this school building and erected on the school site the house occupied for some years by Luther Penhale. Snell also erected the two houses immediately north of the Penhale house. Snell tore down the old Digory Braund house in Francistown and built several houses from the material including one or two on John Street.

C. B. Snell built the garage now known as Snell Bros. Ltd. In order to build this garage it was necessary to construct part of it over an open creek which ran through Exeter at that time. Snell persuaded Council in the 1920's to enclose the open creek in a large tile along the north side of Anne Street. After this had been done Snell built the four red brick houses along the street. Snell purchased the old Commercial Hotel about 1916 and converted it to stores and apartments.

Snell attempted to provide Exeter with a hospital when he purchased the old James Pickard house on Main Street; the house was just south of the garage he had built. He then converted the house to a hospital; the project was not, however, successful.

As might be expected Snell owned one of the first cars in Exeter. He was an avid lawn bowler and again as perhaps might be expected in those days he was "a leading member of the James Street Methodist Church."

For many years one of Exeter's leading Main Street figures was B. W. F. Beavers. Before noting Beavers' business activities it is worth mentioning one or two facts about his family background. The Beavers emigrated from Yorkshire, to be specific from Hull, Yorkshire in 1846. They sailed on the immigrant ship "Stentor" and the voyage to Quebec took three months. The family, William Beavers and his wife Sarah (Clarkson) and their children first went to Toronto and then made the rough journey to Blanshard Township and took up Lot sixteen, Concession four. William could not stand the rigors of pioneer life and died in 1849 at the age of forty nine leaving his wife Sarah who was forty two years old and their nine children named Mary, Joseph, Benjamin, William, John, Hariot, Hannah, George and Samuel. Sarah proved to be tougher stuff than her husband because after burying him in the cemetery where the first log Methodist Church was built on the Mitchell road she proceeded to raise her family; she lived to be ninety years old passing away in 1897.

William Jr. the third son of the pioneer couple married Louisa Senn. Louisa's family history contains the following anecdote: Mrs. Senn's father's mother, that is, Louisa's great grandmother was stolen by Indians when she was five years old and living with her family in Pennsylvania in the early 1700's. The girl was carried away by the Indians who also took her younger brother and an aunt. The Indians killed the aunt and the boy but the little girl was spared and became a favorite of the chief. She was finally ransomed at the age of twelve by a German with whom she stayed until she was twenty at which time she married Joseph Senn, a Swiss silk weaver.

William and Louisa stayed in Blanshard and raised a family including Benjamin W. F. Beavers who eventually settled in Exeter marrying Michael Eacrett's daughter. Beavers operated stores in various locations and engaged in various types of retail trade ending his business life in 1946 when his son Reg took over the hardware store. B. W. F. Beavers was a leader among businessmen's groups such as the Chamber of Commerce but he is probably best remembered for his contribution to the municipal affairs of the community. The chapter on municipal affairs deals further with B. W. F. Beavers.

It is, of course, not possible to deal extensively with every business on Main Street but it is worth mentioning some of the others. Farmer Bros. was a well known name on Exeter's Main Street for a number of years. The Star Grocery was started by Thomas Farmer in the 1870's on the corner of Huron and Main Streets and later moved to the site now occupied by the shoe store north of the Town Clerk's office. The business was taken over by John and Richard Farmer and expanded to include liquor and wines. Eventually the liquor and grocery business was separated in two stores with the grocery store being where the shoe store is now located and the liquor store in a building immediately to the south. This building which housed the liquor store had been Exeter's first Bible Christian Church. Many stories are told of the tricks played on old John Farmer in this liquor store. In 1908 J. G. Jones purchased Farmer's grocery store and installed a seed mill in the building. About the same time Alfred Walters purchased the liquor store which he converted to a shoemaking establishment. Walters had come to the Devon settlement south of Exeter from Devonshire. He operated the hotel at Devon for a time before coming to Exeter as a shoemaker. Alf Walters' shoestore was a favorite haunt of the top checker players of the village Apparently the occasional drop was also available in the shop

J G Jones bought the old building however, in 1915 and moved it to the rear of his store where it became a poultry barn and later a warehouse At least part of the building still stands behind the A and H Grocery store and is still used as a storage building First a church then a grocery store, and a liquor store, a shoe store, a chicken barn and now a warehouse the old building has served the town in many ways providing "spiritual" solace in several ways

Other stores sold liquor and wines in Exeter in addition to Fermer Bros We mentioned that Isaac Carling's store sold liquor G A Moce sold groceries and liquors for over twenty years until 1887 when the business was purchased by J W Broderick F J Knight sold groceries and liquors in the 1890's and early 1900's Knight's store was on the corner where Dorlings store is now located Samuel Hersey sold groceries and liquors and it is worth noting that his daughter Mabel became superintendent of nurses at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal She was awarded an Order of the British Empire.

There have been many many other stores selling groceries, meats and general merchandise in addition to the large stores which we have mentioned The following come to mind G A Hyndman Groceries and Ice Cream Parlor - "The coolest and best appointed in town" Wood and Fuke Butchers J P Clarke General Merchant, Trick and Currelly in Francistown, Groceries the Currelly of this business was the father of Charles Currelly who was born in 1876 and who became a world renowned archeologist and first curator of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto Currelly, in his autobiography comments on the economic life of Exeter in the 1880's as follows

> "Exeter at that time was a village of about two thousand a mile and a quarter long with two or three streets on each side of its Main Street
>
> The village was extremely pretty owing to its tidiness and the flowers and vegetables growing everywhere Economically the town was free from misery The only real tragedy was typhoid fever I can remember a hundred and twenty-five cases in a single autumn
>
> As I left at an early age I was afraid that I might have idealized this life but I consulted a man who had left at a mature age and he assured me that I had not done so If a man were out of work for a few days in the summer time, he was rather glad as it gave him a chance to do more in his garden In the winter he could get more wood cut up A number of families kept a cow which ran the roads and milk products were plentiful The comfort of the population was largely due to the great economy there was no waste, and food was ridiculously cheap by modern standards. The best beef was ten cents a pound the poorest about four cents. Chickens were five cents a pound ducks six cents, and turkeys seven cents. Bread was five cents

> for a large loaf, and milk was five cents a quart. Most of the vegetables were home grown. The farmers stripped the hides from their beasts, our tanner tanned them, and excellent shoemakers made the leather into long boots, which came nearly to the knees, for the farmers. The boots had brilliant red or green pieces of leather set in the front. Ordinary boots and occasionally what were called low shoes were made for the villagers. The farmers' wool was woven into blankets and the woollen mill was capable of weaving quite complicated designs. We manufactured our own wooden pumps, wagons, sleighs and buggies, and nearly all of our furniture. We had one fair-sized factory, the Verity Plow Company. The main imports were groceries and cloth. Wages were steady at a dollar a day. Apprentices started at three dollars a week, or, if they boarded in, as they usually did, it was fifty dollars for the first year, seventy-five for the second and a hundred for the third. After that they became journeymen. For some reason a large number of the village boys became tailors. Most of the work was done on a friendly basis by people who had gone to school together, grown up together, and called one another by their Christian names.
>
> During this period of my life I spent much of my free time watching men at work until I knew a good deal about the different trades that were practised in the village, blacksmithing, woodworking, stone cutting, and stone polishing. Later I had to work with archaeologists who knew nothing about these basic kinds of work and then found what a great advantage I had in the study of early craftsmanship, as the village trades were much the same trades that one met in examining ancient communities.

We have been noting the food stores. We can also add to the list Stanley and Jermyn, J. Crunnican "The People's Grocery Store", Henry Bierling's store in Exeter North. J. T. Manning, meats occupied the original Carling store for a time. Louis Day's Butcher Shop operated until 1900. After that Louis operated a dairy herd, produced vegetables from his market gardens and otherwise helped supply Exeter's food requirements. Louis had come from Amberly in Gloucestershire to London and thence to Exeter in the 1890's to manage Suell's Packing Plant. Louis Sr. died in 1947 at the age of eighty-eight. His son Louis has been a well known figure in Exeter for years, being best remembered perhaps by the many children whom he befriended and gave rides to on his wagon. Louis Day Jr. was one of the last to keep horses to work land within the town limits and was the last to keep milk cows within the town limits. His barn until recently stood behind the post office as a reminder of the days when many of Exeter's stores and houses had barns at the rear of the property. These barns provided housing for the cows, horses, pigs and poultry which were kept by a majority of the towns people in the past.

Hooper and Bissett's Grocery was one door south of Samwell and Pickards. R. E. Spicer's Grocery was in the Southcott block

We mentioned the Farmers' Cash Market on the Town Hall grounds. There was Rolhes Grocery in the 1930's. Frank Coates, Aljoe Sanders, Irwin Ford, H. C. Rivers are other names to add to the list of food merchants.

Every type of store could be found on the Main Street of Exeter. Common to most small Ontario towns like Exeter was the undertaking trade, usually associated with the furniture business. One of the early undertaking firms was that of Charles and Samuel Gidley whose furniture business and undertaking rooms were located in the Oddfellows Block. We have mentioned the details of the Gidley family in an early section. Samuel Gidley lived in the Gidley house on William Street until 1904 when he sold it to Valentine Mitchell and moved to Duluth, Minnesota. Charles remained in Exeter.

John Drew, "undertaker," could be found next door to Molsons Bank in the store now occupied by Dinneys. He also had other locations. Drew's advertisements advised the people of Exeter and area that he had:

> "Coffins of all sizes kept on
> hand and made to order,
> shrouds and burial robes made
> of the best material. Funerals
> attended to with promptness.

The best hearse in the County furnished for five dollars."

John Drew further advised that he used the "techniques of the Egyptian embalmer" to prevent the "discoloring of corpses and offensive odours." Drew sold his business in 1887 after, perhaps, thirty years in the trade to Robert N. Rowe and Walter Andrew.

R. N. Rowe was the son of Thomas Rowe who had come from St. Kew, Cornwall, to Stephen Township in 1853. Thomas had twelve children. One of them, Robert N., was one of Exeter's well known Main Street figures for over fifty years. When he and Andrew took over Drew's business in 1887 he began an undertaking career that lasted for fifty years; it is said that he buried over two thousand people. He saw the disappearance of the horse-drawn, high black hearse with the black plumes and black nets covering the horses and the appearance of the motor vehicle to replace the horses. He also saw the end of the $25 funeral. Rowe died in 1952. The business is now operated by R. Dinney.

Other undertakers included John Brawn whose furniture and undertaking rooms were "opposite Kemp's Tobacco Store" on the corner of Main and Gidley. James Beverly's "Furniture Emporium" was in the Oddfellow's Block in the early 1900's. W. C. Huston was advertised as "the practical embalmer." There were the firms of Popplestone and Gardiner, Hopper and Hockey as well.

Hardware stores included Hugh Spackman's W J Bissett who represented the Deering Harvesting Company T Hawkins and Son (now operated by G Fisher), O Bryne and Company W H Moneur and J N Howard W J Heaman opened a hardware store in the early 1900 s in the store now known as Gunns Heaman served on Exeter s Council for ten years during which time he was Reeve for two years He was Lieutenant in F Company 33rd Huron Militia regiment and eventually became Lieutenant Colonel of the Huron Battalion (Militia) During the first World War he served first as a Captain and then as a Major in Huron's one hundred and sixty first Heaman was a liberal in politics The Heaman home was on John Street where K Johns lives now Heaman sold out to Lindenfield and Traquair and moved to London he served several terms as mayor of that city A small note of interest mentioned by J M Southcott was that Fred Heaman the “Colonel's son”, owned the first radio in Exeter and J M Southcott mentioned hearing a piano recital from Detroit in 1922 over Heaman s radio

Hardware stores sold all types of hardware did tinsmithing sold coal oil and fuels An item in the Times of March eighth 1877 mentions that ‘coal oil has come down considerably this last week on account of the ring formed for the purpose of keeping the price up being broken (the price had come down from fifty cents to twenty five cents for an amount not mentioned in the item)

In addition to the liquor stores which supplied spirituous drink Exeter had several drug stores to help supply the wants of the villagers The drug stores sold liquor from time to time under license and only to people with prescriptions from a doctor A good many of the patent medicines sold also consisted of healthy portions of alcohol or drugs such as laudanum (a mixture of alcohol and opium) The druggists dispensed medicines such as Merchants Gargling Oil (a liniment for man and beast) Ayer s Sarsparilla Baxter s Mandrake Bitters St Leon s Mineral Water an Elixer Vita for Dispepsia and Piles Freemans Worm Powders Paines Celery Compound and countless other cures for Nervous Prostration Female Weakness Paralysis Hot Flashes St Vitus Dance Broken Constitution Dyspepsia Constipation Frightful dreams Scrofula Consumption Tenderness in the Stomach Boils Carbuncles summer complaint pains anywhere and an endless list of other ailments

Also available were cures for male problems such as “seminal weakness” or spermatorrhea induced by self abuse, involuntary emissions impotency impediments of Marriage etc ’ Various cures for these problems were advertised by a Dr Culverwell by “a missionary just returned from South America”, by Drs Kennedy and

Kergan of Detroit. Testimonials appeared from men who "suffered untold agonies", because of "sinful habits in youth", they testified to cures for syphilis, emissions, varicocle, and impotency

Burdock Blood Bitters "cured scrofulous constitutions and Hereditary Taints in the System". Halloway's Pills fixed "Debilitated Constitutions". "Keep your stomach clean and your bowels regular" Dr. Carsons Bitters will do it. Advertisements for various medicines are reproduced on the following pages

The drug stores dispensing these and other medicines in Exeter included the Dominion Medical Laboratory owned by Dr. Browning who "dispenseth knowledge in no limited degree". Brownings Drug Store was open until very recently and was the oldest business establishment in Exeter. More will be said about Dr. Browning below. Grieves Drug Store (next to Seniors), Van Dusens Drugs, and H. Noseworthy who sold drugs and sewing machines one door west of the Commercial Hotel were others. Dr. Lutz, sold to W. S Cole in 1906 after decades of practice in Exeter then moved to Gananoque where he died in 1913 In 1904 William Howey bought D Hartlieb's repair shop and set up his son in the drug business W Howey sold out in 1935 to a Mr Walker who sold to Robertson in 1940 who in turn sold to W Huntley who presently owns the store.

Exeter has had various bakers and confectioners including A Skinner J Logg who in 1874 advertised his "Ice Cream Saloon" with ice cream and temperance drinks, Joseph Lindsay, George Northmore who operated the Exeter Bakery Bells Bakery E A Follick's Ice Cream Parlour, Bagshaw, W E Middleton Wm Statham J T O'Brien and R Luxton The last five men operated the bakeshop and restaurant now operated as Spicers This shop has been there since before the turn of the century and the barns behind this shop burned down in one of Exeter's most spectacular fires

A listing of other stores is provided below but it is no way intended to be complete The names are mentioned only to illustrate the variety of stores found There were stores selling boots, shoes and harnesses of which Eacrett's and Walker's has been mentioned Others included William Fanson who built "Fanson's Block" in the 1860's just north of the Central Hotel Fanson later moved to Winnipeg. This business block was later owned by A J McDonnell and Judge Dickson Other harness shops will be dealt with in the chapter on horses

W. Johns was a tailor whose weekly advertisement said "Get your pants down" at W Johns McClelland Brothers in Drew's Block sold clothing. J G Smallacombe was a tailor John Back, flour and feed, operated the Exeter Seed Store north of Carling's in the 1870's he advertised "Imports direct from the fountainhead —

England" A. E. Moore, Will Folland, W. Trott leather; M. M. Rosebrugh, books, vases, "fancy boxes"; S. E. Jones, clocks and watches; G. Sanders, tobacco, books etc.; Miss Garlick, millinery; Kemp's tobacco store featuring Tin Tac Sweet Chewing Tobacco: George Kemp was also the agent for steamship tickets; C. Southcott and Sons, clothiers and tailors; Sinclair Tait, toys and fancy goods; J. Swallow, pumps, in the Southcott block; A. Lake, insurance and land agent in Fanson's Block, R. H. Sweet, boots and shoes. These names were found along Exeter's Main Street. Others can be added. William Grigg came to Exeter from Plymouth in Devon in 1855. In the early 1860's he opened a book and stationery store where MacMillan's is now. He had been a tailor but decided to try a new field. He died in 1908 and his son John carried on the business for years. Grigg's was the chief source of school supplies and every September the store was packed with eager youngsters buying their school books, pencils and paper. R. Swenerton handled seed grain, quick lime, salt and coal near the station. Perkins and Martin had a music store. C. Eacrett carried boots, shoes and bicycles. R. Hicks was a watchmaker and marriage licence issuer. John Treble sold boots and shoes (Later R. Sweet's). Grieves Tailor Shop was one door north of Dr. Lutz and was sold to W. W. Taman in 1903 and to McKnight and Walper years later, and is now George Vriese's store. Incidentally some men's wear prices in 1902 were coats for seven dollars and seventy five cents, pants for one dollar and fifty cents, boy's suits sold for two dollars and handkerchiefs were eight for twenty-five cents. T. Fitton was Exeter's first optician and jeweller, he had come to Exeter in 1867, built a number of houses on Main Street south of the river and opened his store in the Fanson Block; his son Saxon, who was the first child born in the incorporated village of Exeter took over the business from his father who died in 1925 at the age of eighty eight. When Saxon died in 1937 the business became Taylor's Jewellery store and is now Campbells.

The Opera House Block housed various businesses including furniture and undertaking businesses. The Opera House is more fully treated in a later chapter. In the 1930's it contained a Massey Harris agency and later an automobile supply store. Willis Powell who died in 1957 at the age of seventy nine, operated Powell's Bazaar, a variety store; he also owned the Purity Manufacturing Company whose chief product was Nameless Cold Remedy. Levitt's Fair, a variety store was operated by W. Levitt for some years. Levitt also bought the Grand Bend Park, a fifty acre area, from John Spackman in 1901. Levitt sold the variety store in 1902 to a Mr. Talbot who changed the name to Talbot's Bazaar.

In more recent years store names such as Severn's shoe repair,

The Exeter radio shop, Snell and Boyle, The Institute of Musical Progress (Mrs. H. Gambrill), John C. Vidt lockers, Ralph Bailey florist (on the former William Snell property), Lawson and Tr ck jewellers come to mind. One also recalls Sam Lee's Chinese Laundry where Rowe's Electric is now located. Sam did shirts for ten cents, handkerchiefs for two cents. There was Wong's Cafe where Beavers Hardware Store is now. Another member of Exeter's Chinese business community was Pong Kwong's Laundry and Quick Lunch opposite the Dome Theatre and rink in the 1920's. Apparently these Chinese had a tough time in Exeter facing the jokes and teasing of the younger and not so young population. Ben Makins Steam Laundry and Steam Bath was north of the bowling green and later just south of the green; the steam baths were frequented by the hockey players after games. C. T. Brooks operated the express office where N. Hockey's Barber Shop was later located and where Norm Martin's Optometrist office is now; a man named Gillespie drew the freight from the office.

The photographic record of Exeter and its families was made largely by the Senior family although in the 1880's W. T. Johns advertised his "Sunbeam Art Gallery" in Exeter North. It was, however, the Seniors who did most of the photography in the area. Charles Senior started in July 1867 with tin type photographs; his first photo studio was in the old Carling store where the Bell and Laughton building is now. Senior then purchased the old Royal Hotel building. His son Joseph Senior took over the business and in 1906 he acquired the building which now houses the poolroom and Rether's Restaurant. Joseph Senior practiced his photographic trade until 1943. Senior taught Czar Rollins, a son of Dr. Rollins, photography and Rollins became a photographer for the Cleveland News. Joseph Senior was village clerk for several decades as well. In 1939 he sold the north part of his building to Nelson Statton who opened a poolroom there. Statton had previously, in 1937, opened a poolroom across the street. This poolroom was the first in Exeter and created a terrible stir; the good villagers were sure that the fires of hell would rage and burn in Exeter now that there was a poolroom. This contentious issue will be commented upon elsewhere. In 1943 Jim Grieve purchased the south part of the Senior building and opened the restaurant which is now Rether's. Joseph Senior died in 1955 at the age of ninety. A few of his old pictures still survive although the old metal plates were melted for scrap during World War One and many of his glass negatives were used for windows in Bailey's greenhouse.

Exeter's financial affairs have been handled over the years by a number of banks. The first bank to open in Exeter was probably the "Exchange Bank of Canada" which was established in Exeter in the early 1870's. W. A. Hastings was the first manager. The Exchange Bank failed in 1882. In 1874 when Exeter had eight hundred and fifty four people Molson's Bank opened a branch in the village. The branch was located in Drew's building at the corner of Main and Huron. The first manager was Edward Strathy who remained until 1877; he was succeeded by H. E. Brewer who served until 1883 and was followed by A. A. C. Denovan. The next manager was R. H. Archer and shortly after him in 1885 came clearly the most colorful man ever to manage a bank in Exeter and one of the most colorful characters ever to live in Exeter; this fellow was Nicholas Dyer Hurdon who was born in Bideford, Devonshire and who entered the banking field with the National Bank of England in Barnstaple, North Devon in 1862. He served six years in London and then emigrated to Montreal where he entered Molson's Bank. He was posted to Exeter as manager in 1885. During his tenure as manager the bank moved to a new building in 1901. This building is now the P.U.C. office. In order to erect it there the bank purchased the property owned by a Mr. Smale for three thousand dollars; the three frame stores (previously mentioned) were demolished. The new building cost ten thousand dollars to build but was centrally located and served the Bank until 1943. N. Dyer Hurdon continued as manager until December 31, 1914 when he retired after fifty two years in banking. Unfortunately he did not live long thereafter, passing away on August twenty-fifth, nineteen nineteen. Dyer Hurdon was a prominent leader in the affairs of Exeter's societies, lodges, churches, athletics, and patriotic celebrations for thirty four years. More will be said about him in other chapters.

N. Dyer Hurdon was followed by W. D. Clarke who managed the bank until 1919. T. S. Woods took over in 1919 and was manager when Molsons amalgamated with the Bank of Montreal on the twenty ninth of October, 1929. Molsons was the last of Canada's family banks having been founded in 1853. Woods remained as the manager of what is now the Bank of Montreal in Exeter until 1935 when he was succeeded by W. H. Morse who served until 1940. W. J. Floyd, J. F. Hendry, C. E. Shaw and C. Smith were the last four managers.

Exeter had only one private bank in its history; that was B. S. O'Neill's bank which was established in 1877 in offices now occupied by the Raymond law office. This bank operated until about 1903 or 1904 when it was bought by the Sovereign Bank. Mr. O'Neill lived in the large house on the south west corner of James and Albert Street occupied in recent years by the Farrows.

In July, 1902 the Sovereign Bank opened a branch in Exeter in the building now occupied by Russells. The manager was Mr. F. E. Karn. In 1903 the Sovereign Bank bought the McArthur and Com

pany bank in Hensall and the Snell and Company banks in Dashwood and Zurich. The Sovereign Bank was taken over in 1908 by the Bank of Commerce.

The Commerce Bank operated in the same office as the Sovereign Bank for three or four years until a new bank building was erected on property purchased from John Treble. Mr. Treble had operated a business which produced and sold boots, shoes and harness. He had been on the site for many years. Treble was born in 1837 and died in 1901, and was one of Exeter's early businessmen. The new bank was opened in 1912. This is the building where the Bank of Montreal is now located because in 1943 the Bank of Commerce left Exeter and the Bank of Montreal took over the building. For about ten years Exeter had only one bank. This was the first time since the 1880's that Exeter had only one bank. The Bank of Nova Scotia opened a branch in the early 1950's.

The Post Office was an important institution on the Main Streets of Ontario's small towns. Exeter became a post village in 1855 with the first postmaster being William Sanders. We mentioned that a number of Sanders families came to Exeter, they all came from Devonshire and probably were somehow related. Francistown was designated a post village about the same time. John McDonnell was the first postmaster in Francistown. The Francistown post office was probably in McDonnell's Tavern. The first Exeter post office was in Sanders' house which stood on Main Street just north of the present location of Sanders' grocery store which was in a building erected by William Sanders in the 1860's. Sanders moved the post office to this building in the 1860's.

By the early 1850's, the people of the area were becoming impatient with the poor postal service. As we noted the post office was not established until 1855 and in 1852 people such as McLeod complained that "One great grievance subsists in the two petty post offices of this tract on London Road, viz., though a person do deliver a letter to the courier say here, he the postman delivers the same in the next post office where it must remain until his next trip."

One of the two post offices mentioned by McLeod was the Hay post office located about two miles north of Exeter. "It was opened October 6, 1842 with Joseph Hardy as the first postmaster. It was the only post office for a large district, so large, indeed, that others besides Mr. McLeod had reason to complain as the following incident will prove. A certain Mrs. Fisher who lived near Elimville in Usborne Township, seven miles away from Exeter walked into the village one summer day, carrying ten dozen eggs for which the merchants allowed her five cents a dozen. The amount received, fifty cents, was so disappointingly small that she exclaimed—

'I'll not sell any more eggs at that price.'

"What will you do with them?" asked the merchant.

"We'll eat them" was her reply

But her troubles were not over for she had to walk two miles farther north to Hay post office for the mail Thence home, a long nine miles more, thus making what would be called today an almost incredible tramp of eighteen miles

From 1855 to 1875 the mail was carried by stage The first mail carrier was John Rattenbury who ran the mail stage from Goderich to London and back a round trip on this run required a week Ted Crawley and William Brooks were the last mail carriers on the London Road Brooks was killed in a nasty stagecoach accident which is described in the chapter on transportation With the coming of the railway in late 1875 the services of the mail stages were no longer needed at least for the towns on the railway Stages still had to be used to carry mail and passengers from Exeter to Dashwood Grand Bend St Marys and other communities not reached by rail from Exeter The stage services to these places continued until well after the turn of the century and the introduction of motor vehicles

William Sanders served as post master until 1873 although his son had been named deputy postmaster for some years before 1873 as William's health was poor. Sanders son also operated the telegraph when it came to Exeter in 1876 Miss Mary Sanders operated the telegraph service in the old Sanders house on Main Street until about 1928

1873 was an election year and the Reform Party under Alexander Mackenzie defeated MacDonald and the Tories As was common at that time, the postmasters were often changed when the government changed and in Exeter "A died in the wool Grit," David Johns, a hardware merchant and tinsmith who had been in Exeter for about twelve years was appointed postmaster It was said that even though he was a Grit Johns was loved by the Tories as well so the appointment was not unpopular Johns moved the post office from Sanders building to his frame building on the north corner of James and Main Shortly after this move he transferred the post office to a frame building located somewhere in the vicinity of the present post office Then in 1878 Johns erected a two story brick building across the road from the Royal Hotel This building is now occupied by Lindenfields Johns also erected the house now the Hopper-Hockey Funeral home about the same time He moved the post office to the south store and a store operated in the north part of the building It is worth noting that Johns's salary in 1893 was eight hundred and sixty-five dollars per annum Johns died in 1898 "after an illness of several years duration" but which took a more serious turn all that was mortal of postmaster Johns died on Monday morning he was a man of sterling qualities, his word being as good as his bond". Johns was a Methodist and a prime mover in the construction of the Main Street Church.

Edward Christie another Liberal succeeded Johns as postmaster in 1898. Christie had been a cabinet maker, a hotel owner, operating the old Royal Hotel, he had owned a livery stable and had dealt in horses. Christie's wife was a Carling. The post office revenue, incidentally, in 1898 was $2442.60; in addition $1524 worth of money orders were issued. The post office remained during Christie's time in the same location as it had been. Christie died in 1917 at the age of seventy-four; his son E. J. Christie died while never officially designated, acted as post master until 1917 when W. J. Russell, a returned veteran who had lost an arm at Ypres was appointed. The local Conservative organization had recommended W. J. Carling for the office but the government chose the war veteran Russell instead. Russell died in 1921 and was succeeded by Milton W. Pfaff. Pfaff was postmaster for about thirty years and was succeeded by Harvey Pfaff the present office holder and sixth postmaster in Exeter.

The site of the present post office was purchased in 1914. At that time there were three buildings on the site, W. G. Beer's Harness shop, J. Davis' feed store, and an old building that had been a blacksmith shop and then owned by Dr. Ronlston. These buildings were torn down. Beer moved to the store where Russell's is now. An open space between the Bank of Commerce and Heamans Hardware was then available for the new post office. The open space remained for sixteen years — until 1930; most of the time it was an eyesore in the center of Exeter's Main Street although

Site of the Post Office

euphemistically designated Federal Park and occasionally beautified by the Horticultural Society

The government in 1930 finally erected a new post office It was officially opened on June 12, 1930 Milton Pfaff the post master, Miss Caroline Davis and Miss Florence West were the staff members The building was erected by Beaver Bros of Crediton with Traquair and Lindenfield doing the painting and tinsmithing. The building cost $31,000

The Francistown post office still exists and is now designated as Hay post office.

This outline of Exeter s business and commercial activity could not be complete without mention being made of the professions The medical profession has been well represented in Exeter over the years It is difficult to be sure which doctors were practicing at the same time in the village but it would appear that Exeter had between seven and ten doctors in the late 1870 s and 1880's and 1890 s These would have been Doctors Hyndman Browning, Irving Morden, Moore, Cowan Lutz, and Rollins Amos and Dr Hutchinson This group of doctors were the early medical practitioners in Exeter At least seven of them practiced simultaneously, when one adds the doctors in each of the small villages around Exeter it is apparent that the number of doctors was much larger then than it is at present in South Huron

The first area doctor was John Hyndman M C P S whose office was first located next door to Isaac Carling s store Hyndman as we mentioned previously was a son of Sheriff Hyndman Huron's first Sheriff and early settler He first practiced in the Devon Settlement in 1851 moving to Exeter five or six years later About 1860 Dr Hyndman built the house on the west corner of Huron and Albert Streets It is reported that Hyndman's first patient in the area was Philip Andrew who had broken his leg in the bush Hyndman gave him medical attention in one of the inns on the London Road south of Exeter Hyndman was evidently just arriving on the stage when Andrew was brought in Dr Hyndman died in 1899 His obituary in the 'Times reads in part as follows

> "The death of Dr Hyndman removes one, who for many years has gone in and out among us and carried the white flower of a stainless life Always a gentleman always zealous for the high standard of his profession his patients became his devoted friends and had for him a love and respect that is all too rare among the practitioners of our day No man whatever his calling will be more missed than the white-haired courteous gentleman whose body racked often with pain continued at his post to the last — Dr Hyndman was a link in the history of the County of Huron of which but little of the chain remains

> May the turf rest lightly on the kind heart that is still below. . . A most appropriate and touching service (was) conducted in the Trivitt Memorial Church . . . The pallbearers were David Mill, T. B. Carling, R. Pickard, Thom Case, B. S. O'Neill and L. Hardy."

Dr. Hyndman's practice was assumed by his son Dr. Hugh K. Hyndman. Hugh was born in the family house on Huron Street on October 14, 1863; he graduated in medicine from the University of Western Ontario in 1886. Hugh Hyndman found time from a busy practice to cultivate the finer things in life; he was interested in the arts, grew flowers, was a keen horseman; Margaret Strang in an essay on Dr. Hyndman noted that he kept a stable of fine horses but that his practice was so wide "that there were times when he did not have a fresh horse in his stable with which to answer a country call". Hyndman also raised Airdales as well. He was an Anglican and a Conservative. He had some business interests, one of them being the telephone. He and his brother George started the telephone system which they later sold to the Fraynes and which was still operated by that family until very recently. In connection with this telephone system Margaret Strang makes the following remarks: "When the telephone came into general use the doctor was quick to see its possibilities in a rural community. But nobody knew anything about telephones in that district — who was going to build the lines and keep them in shape? He would do it himself — and he did. The Hyndman Telephone Line, with ramifications over many miles of adjacent townships, has been an institution in the district for twenty years. He ordered the phones, poles and equipment to be shipped in, hired the men to do the work, financed the building, set his own rental rates, arranged an exchange with the Bell Telephone Company, and his own brother kept the books in the doctor's office."

Dr. Hyndman did his best to keep up to date on new treatments and equipment in the field of medicine. New treatments and new equipment came into vogue, and the doctor's library and equipment swelled accordingly, for he kept up with them all, though how and when he managed to read so widely only he knew. When he could go so far in diagnosis, but not far enough without the x-ray, he installed a small high frequency machine and employed an office nurse to use the equipment; he did not only his own work but also a great deal for the local dentists.

"During the same year he opened the rooms above his office as a small private hospital. That was the year of the first influenza epidemic, and the new small hospital, small as it was, proved an inestimable boom to the stricken community. So highly was it commended that even after the epidemic passed it was kept on as a permanent affair. Here the doctor treated successfully some of his worst cases and here also came prominent surgeons from the neighbouring cities to do major operations for those patients who preferred to remain near home

During the influenza epidemic in 1918 the doctor worked day and night till he fainted under the strain He was put to bed with pneumonia and stayed there one week The only help he could get was a fourth year medical student, and long before he was able the doctor was back to work again The heart-breaking strain of those long months told upon him, and in the next few years he developed angina pectoris He knew what to expect, but kept quietly on set all his affairs in order kept his knowledge to himself and died without warning on March 6 1926, after a day among his patients The day of his funeral was one of blustering March winds and breaking roads yet time and distance could not keep the multitude of his friends and patients away They came from far and near to add their token of appreciation of a good and great physician"

The practice was taken over by Dr M Fletcher who still carries this practice on after almost fifty years

Another early doctor in Exeter was Dr Winans Winans was born in Simcoe in 1812 married Millison Anne Carson in 1837 and came to Exeter in 1863 where he opened a medical practice and drug store He had previously practiced in Picton and Georgetown Winans was an Exhorter and Local Preacher in the Methodist Church and a member of the Y P C A Dr Winans had two sons both of whom led interesting but tragically short lives George E A Winans the elder son became a doctor after first doing a year at the Toronto Normal School He studied medicine with his uncle Dr G A Carson of Whitby He completed his studies without attending medical school and obtained his medical certificate in late 1864 In early 1865 like thousands of other Canadian boys he went to the war dividing the United States and joined the Union Army He became a surgeon in Grant s army and was posted to Harewood Hospital near Washington Among descriptions of the hospitals he wrote the following in a letter to his uncle

> "Why they think no more of cutting off a leg or arm than you do in Canada of pulling a tooth I do not know how many arms and legs I have seen amputated They are heaped upon the floor in great piles and blood covers the floor so thickly that we might as well say we were wading in blood

He went on to say that "medicines are dispensed lavishly ounces of morphine are used every day hogsheads of simple cerate "

The young doctor through overwork and exposure to unsanitary conditions in the hospital became ill and returned home to

Exeter where despite his father's loving care, he died on June 14, 1865 at the age of twenty-seven.

Winans' other son, William Henry was born in Rockford, Illinois in 1840 and moved with the family in 1852 to Picton, Canada. As was noted Dr Winans was a devout Methodist and the religious atmosphere of the home prompted William to become a preacher. William had attended Toronto Normal School and in 1859 had taken a school in Stephen township near Exeter. He came under the guidance of Mr. Chapman the superintendent of the Exeter Circuit of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. He entered full time preaching and was attached to the Strathroy Circuit. It was noted that he eventually became "dissatisfied with the response of the people of Strathroy . . . and announced a prayer meeting at 5 a.m. followed by preaching at 7:30 a.m." We are led to believe that this disciplinary act had a salutary effect on the congregation at least for a time. This fanaticism was revealed again and again by Winans. Once in Tillsonburg he was preaching at a tight rope walkers' show to a crowd more interested in the show than his preaching but he persisted until a seller of beer and cider moved him on. He worked fanatically at his preaching so hard, in fact that he fell ill and died in Exeter May 30, 1866 at his father's home not quite a year after his brother George had died.

Dr Winans died on March 24, 1874. His medical practice and drug store were taken over by Dr Lutz who remained until 1903 when the drug store was taken over by W. Cole. The store was located where Bob's Variety is now.

Dr Young Cowan, born in Belfast in 1834, had an office on James Street just across from the Central Hotel, about where Russells' side entrance is now. He was in Exeter in the early 1860's. Dr Cowan was a great horse man and is reported to have built a fine new stable which was equipped with electricity and a telephone. Apparently Dr Cowan's interest in horses was greater than his interest in patients at times, since it is reported in the Times in 1884 that a man called at Cowan's office one night seeking medical aid for his wife. He said that "Dr Cowan met me with a scowl, hissed out an oath from between his teeth and shut the door in my face." It was further reported in the Times that the poor man called on three more doctors before getting one to go with him. Dr. Lutz finally went. Dr Cowan practiced in Exeter from the late 1860's to about 1893 when he moved to Galt. Cowan later became Chairman of Pathology and Bacteriology at the Chicago Post Graduate Medical School. He eventually returned to Canada and died in London at the age of eighty-six. His practice in Exeter was taken over by Dr Amos whose medical training had been obtained at Trinity College, Toronto, Glasgow, London, and Edinborough. Dr Amos lived on

Andrew Street, was a Presbyterian and a Liberal. He sold out to Dr. H. R. Bright.

Other early doctors included Dr. Morden, who advertised as a Homoeopathic Surgeon and whose office was "next to Bawden's Marble Works"; Morden practiced in the 1870's. There was Dr. Irving with an office south of Grigg's store. Irving later practiced in Kirkton. Dr. R. C. Moore was another early doctor.

Dr. Hutchinson was in Exeter in the 1870's and owned the famous race horse "Galt Reporter". Dr. James Ardah Rollins practiced from the 1880's until 1905. Rollins although married to the sister of Thomas Greenway was himself an active Conservative. Rollins was born in Biddulph Township in 1847 and graduated from medical school in 1869. He sold his practice to Dr. A. F. Molloy who sold to Dr. Quakenbush.

Certainly the most well-known medical personality in Exeter must have been Dr. Joseph W. Browning M.D., M.C.P.S. Dr. Browning claimed to be the oldest practicing doctor in Canada; he was still practicing when he died in his one hundredth year on December 24, 1942. Joseph W. Browning was born in Glastonbury, Somerset on November 21, 1843; he and his family emigrated to Upper Canada in 1845, settling in Markham. Browning's father was a watchmaker and telegrapher. While in Markham a sister of Browning operated the telegraph for the father who was the Markham agent for the Whitby and Georgian Bay Telegraph Company. Young Joseph Browning learned the art of telegraphy by observing his sister, and took over the job himself at the age of thirteen when his sister was married. Browning in later years told of copying reports of the Crimean War as they came over the wire; he never forgot the telegrapher's art and could still operate the key in his nineties.

In addition to learning telegraphy Browning also began learning his father's watch and clock making trade. He decided, however, that medical studies were to be his chief interest and he left Markham to attend Victoria College, University of Toronto. In order to put himself through medical school he worked as a photographer, wrote fiction, skits and news reports for newspapers. Following his university work he completed his medical training under Dr. Rolfe.

In 1866 Browning moved to Hay Township and on July 3, 1867 he opened his drug store, the Dominion Medical Laboratory, and medical practice in the store which still bears the Browning name. At that time it was one door north of N. Davis' blacksmith shop. Dr. Browning carried on his practice from the same office until his death seventy-nine years later, although he did not really practice much medicine during the last two or three years of his life. His was a remarkable career. During his practice he is supposed to have brought around three thousand babies into the world. That he worked hard is attested to by the fact that he "used up nineteen horses" during his practice. These horses pulled Browning's gig described as a cross between a jinrickshaw and a carretara, "the like of which never existed before or since". He enjoyed the practice of medicine and remarked:

> "I can really say that I never practised for money for whenever I took a patient I hated like the devil to be licked. I wanted to cure the patient if I never got a farthing"

That he should have lived such a long and active life surprised even Browning himself in a way since he had been sickly throughout his early life. He remarked that he had "never been three months out of a doctor's care until I became a doctor myself". He attributed his longevity to his "moderate" habits and "hard work"; he did not drink, but he did smoke cigars. His abstention from alcoholic drink was probably a result of having non drinking parents whose wedding was reported to have been the first dry wedding in that area of Somerset where liquor hard cider and hard perry flowed abundantly He ate sparingly although he did increase his weight from the ninety-eight pounds he weighed on July 3, 1867 to one hundred and seventy five pounds by 1941 He was very careful in his eating habits suggesting accurately enough that people dig their graves with their teeth

He was a man who had wide interests as we have already noted Medicine and pharmacology telegraphy watch making photography writing reading, water color painting were among his interests at the age of ninety-three he took a course in dramatics and elocution As we have noted he practiced both his medical and pharmaceutical professions until he was well into his ninety s when he was ninety three he renewed a prescription for a man who had obtained the original order twenty two years before On another occasion he renewed a prescription forty-eight years old On both occasions it took him only a few minutes to pick out the prescription from his well-maintained records

In 1937 at the age of ninety-three, J W Browning was reported to be the oldest living graduate of Victoria College, the oldest active physician in Canada and the longest on the job

Dr Browning s wife whom he married after coming to Exeter was the daughter of John McDonnell and Dorothy Balkwill She died in 1931 Their family included two sons who became doctors — Dr J Harry Browning and Dr William E Browning both of whom were active in establishing a hospital in Caledonia

Minnesota. George Fenwick described Dr. Browning in the following words:

> ... "dear Dr. Browning, the truest, most faithful, most capable most conscientious and self-sacrificing human being that either an individual or a community could claim as a friend. For steeped as he was body and soul in that divine largeness which was the better part of him, stressed to administer to the stricken ones where and when the call came, be it night or day through darkness, sunshine or storm, through slush and mud, snowdrifts, or hard, rutted country roads leading out into the sparsely-settled and almost inaccessible parts of a raw, up-building country where stricken ones lived in shacks, often hid from view of the roads so that they were difficult to locate, and where the very primitiveness of the living offered him less than no aid at all in his administrations and where he had to fight ignorance, sloth and unsanitary conditions in addition to the disabilities of his patients — but where the very man in him never faltered and where his admirable courage never flagged where his self-sacrificing self and his will to do was always in the ascendency where the surety to aid or cure was always a paramount part of him where kindness of heart and optimism of spirit flooded the sick room to the elimination of all else and to the entirety of himself — this was the man Dr. Browning, often sorely tried but never found to be wanting in all those close unto seventy-five years of his special calling and in his toiling among the good people of Exeter and surrounding country. And he stands today an embodiment of the highest type of citizen and public benefactor that any community in any part of the civilized world could lay claim to and honor"

These are some of the early doctors in Exeter. In addition to the resident doctors, Exeter like the other small towns and villages in Ontario experienced the periodic visits of doctors who advertised themselves as specialists. Such visiting doctors usually set up temporary quarters in one of the hotels and advertised in the papers and sent out leaflets. For example in 1888 Dr. Sinclair, "a specialist in heart and lungs" advertised his presence at the Commercial Hotel. The 'Advocate' urged its readers to see Dr. Sinclair saying "remember this fellow is none of your damn Yankee Quacks." A herbalist was at the Central Hotel on one occasion who cured "all diseases." Dr. Thomas Speer was another visiting physician in the 1880's. He was billed as "Thomas Speer M.D., M.C.P.S. and G.S. and L.T.C.D. The Great East Indian Physician and Surgeon." His leaflets suggested that he was "satisfied to relinquish previous professional emoluments, and confine himself to the treatment of Nasal Catarrh, Cancer, Consumption, Bronchitis, Asthma, Skin Diseases, Rheumatism, Sciatica, Fever Sores, Salt Rheum, Scrofulous Diseases, liver diseases, kidney and Urinary troubles, Bright's disease, Dropsy, Strictures, Pimples on the face, Malaria, Ague. Diseases of women and diseases of a special, difficult and dangerous character". Dr. Speer suggested that by going around the country treating such ailments he could render "greater service to the afflicted" than if he remained in one place.

A Dr. W. E. Dempsey, osteopath and chiropractor spent about a year in Exeter before moving on. His advertising began with the question:

"Is Nature Starting to Foreclose the Mortgage on Your Health?" He treated all manner of ailments from asthma, appendicitis, constipation and female weaknesses to St. Vitus Dance and everything in between.

Other Exeter Doctors included Dr. McGillicuddy who was succeeded by Dr. M. G. Graham. Dr. Graham practiced from 1919 to 1929 — where Dr. Read's practice is now — before going to Formosa as a medical missionary. Graham was succeeded by Dr. Dunlop. Over more recent years such names as Dr. J. E. Jackson, Dr. R. H. Doyle, Dr. F. J. Milner, Drs. Butson, Schulthies, Read, Gans and Ecker come to mind. Dr. John Ward (Chiropractic and Electric Treatments) practiced for well over thirty years until the 1950's. Mention should also be made perhaps of the mid wives such as "Granny" Heywood who brought one hundred and two babies into the world.

While not Exeter doctors the following medical practioners were Exeter boys — Dr. Hugh Creech, Dr. T. Harry Seldon, who joined the Mayo Clinic, Dr. J. H. Browning, Dr. W. E. Browning, Dr. T. H. Legett, born in Exeter June 4, 1878, he became President of the Canadian Medical Association. Dr. Stuart Stanbury, Dr. L. L. Hooper, Dr. Margaret Strang should also be mentioned. Dr. Strang practiced for many years in the frontier area of Alberta.

Dr. Hugh Creech "distinguished himself in research at the Institute for Cancer Research in Philadelphia".

Among the early dentists to practice in Exeter were H. L. Billings whose office was over O'Neil's Bank and who advertised "nitrous oxide for painless extraction". G. T. Wilkie practiced on Fridays at the Commercial Hotel in the 1870's. There was also Henry Kinsman who had been born in Cornwall, England in 1831 and who tried carpentry, book and stationery sales before taking up dentistry. He came to Exeter in 1871 first practicing in an office south of Bell's Bakery and then in one located above Stanbury's law office. Kinsman extracted "Teeth without pain using vegetable vapour." He died in 1903 of "an internal growth" and was succeeded by his son, A. R. Kinsman who was joined in 1906 by G. F. Roulston "a thorough mechanic"; the offices were over Carling's law office. Roulston continued the practice for years being succeeded eventually by Dr. Corbett. Dr. J. A. Ellis had an office in Fan son's Block in the 1880's and 90's and specialized in "artificial teeth". H. R. Abbott came periodically to Exeter in the 1870's and set up in the Central Hotel, he was billed as a "specialist in gold fillings". C. Cartwright took over Billings' office above O'Neills in 1885 and when he went to California a few years later his son W. E. Cartwright took over.

Other dentists that practiced in Exeter include Dr. David Alton Anderson, whose office was over Elliott's law office opposite the Central Hotel, Dr. William Lawson, Dr. G. S. Atkinson, and presently of course, Drs. Cowen and Gratton as well as Dr. Corbett. Dr. Atkinson shot himself while cleaning his rifle in Bayfield in 1935; Atkinson had been a major in the first World War and was given a military funeral.

The veterinary profession has been represented in Exeter for over one hundred years. One of the first "vets" — if not the first, was William Sweet whose office was "opposite Hooper and Bissetts Grocery" which as we noted was one door south of Samwell and Pickards. Dr. J. Fishburn was another early vet. Drs. Tennant and Tennant had an office where the library now stands; the office was north of Russells blacksmith shop and just west of Joseph Bawdens' house and pig barn. Tennant sold to Dr. Ramsay in 1904. Other vets include Dr. Henry Corsault whose office was in Bakers Livery Barn on James Street, Dr. Houze, Drs. Vinning and Sweet whose offices were on the corner of John and Andrew, Dr. J. G. Reid and Dr. E. S. Steiner whose office was first in the old McDonnell Horse Barn on John Street. The present veterinarian is Dr. Roelofson.

The first lawyer to open an office in Exeter was Benjamin Valeck Elliott who came to Exeter in 1860 after having studied and practiced law in Plymouth, Devonshire. Elliott was a Devon man, his birthplace being Kingsand, Devon in 1815. Elliott's office was directly across from the Central Hotel. Elliott built the house occupied later by Dr. Dunlop; he had ten children, seven sons and three daughters. He was "always a staunch Conservative" and an Anglican. He died in 1895 of an "affliction of the bladder" in his eighty-fourth year. His obituary reads in part:

> "One after another the veterans of Exeter's business circle are departing from among us leaving only the lustre of their untarnished names and the example of their exemplary lives for the guidance and emulation of the younger generation his life affords a striking example of the success which invariably attends devotion to duty.

Elliott's wife died in 1915 at the age of ninety. B. V. Elliott had been joined in 1897 by F. W. Gladman who practiced law in Exeter for some years after Elliott's death going into an office with J. G. Stanbury a few years later. J. G. Stanbury had come to Exeter in 1898 and entered the office of R. H. Collins who had come to Ex eter about 1887 Collins died in May 1900 and the facts of his life are best illustrated by quoting his obituary

> "In the death of this gentleman who passed away at his residence on James Street Exeter loses one of the most brilliant and promising barristers in Ontario His legal career has been spent in our midst and for many years past he has been a familiar figure on our streets A man of striking presence and oratorical power while in health no public meeting was considered properly conducted without him and his great abilities were given in the most good natured and enthusiastic way In politics a strong Liberal he has pulled his party through many a wordy contest and was known as a first class speaker throughout Ontario Gifted with a magnificent voice and thoroughly conversant with music, many will remember the Trivitt Memorial church choir as he led it and the thrilling power of his sympathetic tones in many a sacred passage His success as a lawyer was phenomenal he could sway a jury mass an array of legal facts

Collins had been born in Bandon County Cork Ireland in 1854 He had come to Canada with his mother in 1861 He taught public school in Shakespeare high school in Stratford but eventually entered the office of H W Hall Barristers The office was in the Samwell Block There he studied law for several years In 1887 he passed his bar examinations without attending college and began his own practice taking over Hall's office He suffered for months from a growth on the sciatic nerve and "bore with wonderful patience agony of the most excruciating nature" Collin's office was in Samwell s Block where Hall s had been

In addition then to the legal firms of Elliott and Gladman Collins and Stanbury there was also the firm of Dickson and Carling All of these firms existed simultaneously giving Exeter six lawyers at the turn of the century L G Dickson practiced in Exeter from the 1890 s for several decades Judge Dickson was born in Pembroke in 1860 and received his primary education in the Pembroke Schools and later attended Toronto University After his graduation he studied the rudiments of law in the office of L E Dancey in Seaforth for two years afterwards studying at Osgoode Hall from which he graduated in 1885" He became a successful lawyer in Exeter being the senior member of Dickson and Carling until his appointment in 1916 to the senior judgeship in Huron County Dickson was described as "an admirable judge" He was severe with seasoned or graceless offenders, he was merciful to those more sinned against than sinning" Dickson was an Anglican and a Conservative He died in 1923 when a fatal heart attack struck him in his office His wife was Janny MacDonnell

The junior partner in the Dickson and Carling firm was Isaac Routledge Carling, son of old Isaac Carling Isaac Jr lived in the old Carling house on Huron Street. The house was maintained in magnificent style. The following article describing the Carling estate was written by J. M. Southcott in 1932 and is given here since the Carling house was the most luxurious home in Exeter.

> "Lovers of nature in our beautiful village should spend an hour or two on the spacious grounds belonging to Mr. Isaac R. Carling K.C. It was our privilege to spend an hour or more exploring and enjoying the beauties of this fine property. The splendid butternut and Japanese Walnut trees give ample shade on a hot day to those who wish to rest or sit quietly while enjoying the delightful views across spacious lawns or admiring the hedgerows of tall evergreens besides many other trees scattered here and there. Taken altogether it reminds one of some parklike surroundings of large and prosperous institutions. Viewed from the street the fine Corinthean like columns in the front of the home give an impressive appearance to the splendid residence in which he and his sisters live and remind one of the specimens of Grecian and Roman architecture that have come down to us. But it is when we approach from the rear of the property that our sense of the beautiful in gardens is aroused and satisfied. Leading up from the rear entrance is a fine cement walk about nine feet wide and lined with flowers on each side. On the left there in great luxuriance many varieties of the old fashioned but beautiful Stocks, that our grandmothers loved, interspersed with Zinnias, Nicotines, Phlox etc. On the right side were foliages, snapdragons, ageratum, pansies. Then as we travelled farther we came across splendid specimens of bergamot, rudbeckia purpuria and the somewhat scarce but beautiful anemones. We must not omit other flowers such as amaranthus, hydrangeas, goldenglow and tricoma. As we wandered around we passed over to the west side meeting surprises everywhere we went when lo we came upon his rose garden with roses most beautiful and twice the size they are generally. His collection of gladioli was a delight to see. The vegetable gardens were just as fine as the flowers."

Carling practiced law in Exeter until his death in 1934. Carling continued the family's tradition in politics and in religion, being staunchly Conservative and Anglican.

J. G. Stewart Stanbury joined Collins in 1898. After the death of both Collins and Elliott, Stanbury and Gladman formed a legal firm. Stanbury practiced in Exeter from 1898 to 1935. During these thirty-seven years he was "a pillar of the community" serving on the Board of Education, Horticulture Society, and the Huron Liberal Association. Like Carling, Stanbury was an avid gardener; he won many prizes at both the Western Fair and the Canadian National Exhibition. Stanbury was born in Bayfield, the son of a doctor. One of Stanbury's own sons, Stewart, also became a doctor. Stewart Stanbury enjoyed an active medical career making important contributions in the development of insulin, in research on tuberculosis and in work with the Red Cross Another son Richard is now a senator and an important figure in the Liberal Party organization in Canada and Robert present Federal Minister of Revenue W M Martin who became a Liberal Premier of Saskatchewan articled in the Gladman and Stanbury office In 1935 Stanbury was made King s Council and in 1936 he was appointed to a judgeship in Lincoln County

The Gladman-Stanbury practice was assumed in 1941 by William G Cochrane and is now in the hands of Peter Raymond Interestingly this practice has always been politically Liberal The Carling-Dickson practice conversely has always been politically Conservative When Carling died in 1934 the practice was assumed by James Morley Elmer D Bell purchased the practice in 1946 Bell had started a practice in Seaforth and Brussels before the war having graduated from Osgoode in 1932 after serving in the Canadian Army and distinguishing himself with the artillery After his war service Bell came to Exeter where he has practiced ever since in partnership with C V Laughton Elmer Bell served the Progressive Conservative Party in many ways including service as President of the Ontario Party

Over the years other lawyers notaries and other legal officials have had practices in Exeter Some of these whose names are known were M McFadden the firm of Malcomson, Watson and Cuddy J Elliott, C F Clarke and A Horney

For over a century then Exeter has had an active business community The preceding pages do little more than recall the names of some of the people who were involved in business of one kind or another in Exeter during the past one hundred and twenty five years or so The business community seems to have always been a prosperous one In 1902 the Times made the following remarks

> "Exeter has long been noted as one of the most substantial towns in Western Ontario and situated as it is in the centre of the finest farming section in Huron County the Banner County in the province, it is well able to hold its own While Exeter has not been visited by booms it has always enjoyed a healthy and steady growth Our town has always enjoyed the reputation of having among its merchants the most enterprising up-to-date businessmen to be found in the province"

The Times was always urging the citizens to keep the business community prosperous "Be loyal to your town" said the Times "The merchants you patronize may someday be able to direct a dollar into your pocket In any event you needn't look for work or patronage from the Toronto departmental sharks

Generally the citizens of Exeter and area have supported the

local business community and Exeter has been a prosperous town. Even during the Depression this area probably suffered less than many other Ontario communities. Exeter and the adjacent agricultural townships continue to prosper and hold their own despite the continuing centralizing trend in Ontario. This trend to centralization in the giant urban areas is taking its toll in rural and small town Ontario, but the south part of Huron is not losing population to the extent that many other areas of the province are.

Other chapters will deal with the type of businesses that were not mentioned in this chapter.

chapter 3

Cigarettes and Whiskey and Wild, Wild, Women
Hotels, Booze, Temperance

Inside the door ajar
They hid the liquor bar
I have a horror of those shutters
For there the wounded spirit flutters
Ah! many go therein
To find the path of sin.

(from a Temperance Poem 1887)

Hotels, inns and taverns were among the first services established in a pioneer area. They were essential and there were many of them located along the roads. From London to Goderich there were thirty or forty inns as early as the 1840's. In or quite near to Exeter there were a number of primitive inns established in the early years of settlement. Regulations governing these inns were established by the township councils. Usborne township passed a bylaw on October 3, 1854 regulating taverns. The regulations in cluded no drinking of intoxicating liquors on Sundays card playing dice and gambling were prohibited The minimum number of beds that the tavern keeper had to provide were five He also had to maintain a driving shed and an open shed for a minimum of five teams, also a house of conveniency

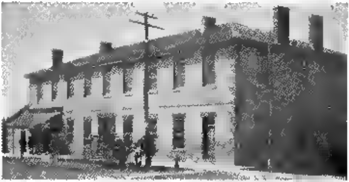
McConnell's Inn was established near where the Presbyterian Church now stands in Exeter This was the first hotel in Exeter and was established in 1833 as a result of Canada Company instructions to McConnell to establish the inn David McConnell operated an inn in Francistown in the 1840's The Balkwill family operated a small tavern in the Devonshire Settlement a short distance south of Exeter at the Crediton Road Also south of Exeter on the corner was Joseph Quick's "Black Horse Inn" established gradually in the 1830's this inn was on a farm later owned by a Mr Walker about two miles south of the town On the Usborne side of the London Road the tavern licence cost eight pounds in 1857 Usborne charged only five pounds for licences off the Loudon Road

There were inns every few miles along the settlement roads and they provided much needed stopping places where the travellers could rest and eat They were oases in the Upper Canadian wilderness Once coach and stage travel became regular operations the inns were the stopping points There were dozens of inns and taverns within a ten mile radius of Exeter however a survey of all of these hostelries is beyond the scope of this work which will deal primarily with Exeter

The hotels not only provided stops for the stages and for those settlers who walked where food rest and lodging could be obtained, they also provided whiskey Whiskey was cheap throughout Upper Canada seldom exceeding twenty-five cents for an Imperial gallon it remained this inexpensive for decades Upper Canadian Nectar" was the label frequently applied to the raw whiskey of Ontario Our fair province acquired a reputation of being one of the most drunken areas known Visitors and observers were "appalled by the destruction and the waste of human resources in Upper Canada from the drinking of raw whiskey The author of Ryerson of Upper Canada also commented that "cheap rot gut whiskey was the quickest means of blotting out the disappointment and the desperation The spectacle of sodden ugly drunkeness was familiar to all those who lived in Upper Canada Grain was cradled, barns raised potatoes hoed evenings passed trees cut, all with the solace and assistance of whiskey Nights on the trail had to be endured at zero and below Travellers believed they could survive the cold if they had a bottle of spirits tucked into their blankets The folklore worked and many travellers survived " There was little restraint on the trade Farmers could pick up a gallon for twenty-five cents to quench their thirst as they worked in their fields. Stores sold liquor of all kinds. Distilleries were dotted across the country supplying the needs of the settlers. "It was a common thing to find a barrel of whiskey on the front porch of a house with a ladle nearby. It was the hospitality of the owner that put it there. The visitor was welcome to take a tot when arriving and departing." Naturally there was a reaction to this widespread drunkenness in Ontario. By the 1870's a strong Temperance movement was flourishing in the province. Doctors and medicine producers were advertising cures for drunkenness. The Exeter area was no different from the rest of Ontario as it passed through the pioneer period of taverns, hotels, liquor to stores, widespread drinking and then the movements for control and Temperance. We will look briefly at these activities in Exeter.

As we noted, the first inn was McConnell's just south of the river. It may have been called the Red Elephant Hotel but this is unconfirmed. We also noted David McConnell's inn which was on the site of Digory Braund's house, near the present location of John Snell's garage. David McConnell's inn is mentioned in the minutes of December, 1842, of the united townships of Usborne, Stephen and Hay. It stated that notice of a meeting of these townships was posted in David McConnell's inn, William Balkwill's inn and William Case's house. The meeting on the first Monday in January 1843, was to be held at David McConnell's inn.

William Balkwill had a tavern from the 1840's to the 1860's. Robert Armstrong was listed as bartender. By the 1860's there were more elaborate hotels making their appearance in the growing village. In the early 1860's mention was made in various sources of Drew's Hotel. The Exeter Hotel, operated by James Gordon and at other times owned by Richard Roach and managed by W. H. Adams. The Exeter Hotel in 1871 was operated by Thomas Elston. The British Exchange Hotel operated by John McBride was referred to only once and may have been erroneously included in the list of Exeter businesses. The names Lorne Hotel, Queens Hotel and the Union Hotel also appeared as well as the Sable Hotel which was operated by Robert Bissett in the 1860's. It is difficult to be certain of the location of some of the early hotels, some may be the same hotels that developed later under different names. In any case during the period of the past one hundred years Exeter has gone from the position of having many hotels to having none. Only one of the old hotel buildings still stands, this is the business block at the corner of Anne and Main Streets now occupied by a bake shop and other stores; this building was the Commercial Hotel. The others are gone. The Central Hotel, Exeter's largest was demolished to provide space for the British Mortgage and Trust — now the Victoria and Grey Trust Company office The Mansion House was on the southwest corner of Main and Huron Streets the Metropolitan Hotel was on the site now occupied by Dobbs car lot at the corner of Wellington and Main Streets The Station Hotel also known as the Exeter Temperance House was on property near the railway now occupied by the canning factory The Royal Hotel was on Main Street near the site of the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Exeter North Hotel or Walper Hotel was on the corner of the Lake Road and the London Road where the Guenther Truckey lot is now located. Balkwill s Tavern was located near the former Silas Handford house on Main Street A brief sketch of each of these hostelries is given below It is likely that no more than five inns existed in the village simultaneously In 1874 five tavern licences were issued to W. E Wilkins, E J Wilkins, William Drew, James Towers and Edward Christie, two shop licences were issued In 1875 five licences to Drew s Hotel (William Drew) The Britannia House (John Pratt) The Francistown Hotel (James Towers) The Mansion House (William Hawkshaw) and W E Wilkins, the Central Hotel


The Walper Hotel

In 1875 the village council limited by law the number of taverns to five The village appointed an Inspector of Taverns whose job it was to enforce the regulations governing taverns including the hours that liquor could be sold In Exeter sales had to cease at ten p m but could begin at five a m in the morning

1 The Walper Hotel

This hostelry was a large building in Francistown and operated under various names the Exeter North Hotel The Exeter North Temperance House and the Francistown Hotel It was operated in the late 1860's and early 1870's by James Towers. Abel Walper acquired it and then in 1877 sold it to H. Martin. In the 1860's the hotel was considered to be one of the finest in the country. It had been erected in the early 1850's possibly by Matthew Rogers. In the 1860's it was operated by James Towers as the Francistown Hotel. Walper probably bought it from Towers. Walper in 1877 went to Berlin (Kitchener) and evidently had something to do with the construction of Kitchener's now famous Walper House.

The hotel was across the Lake Road from Fenwick's Mill and drew trade from the farmers coming into the mill with their grain. George Fenwick, a son of the mill owner, told the following stories about the Walper Hotel. On the occasion of the Fenwick's arrival in Exeter from Zurich one of the Fenwick children pointed to the imposing structure and asked:

"What's that over there, Mother?"

"That's a den of iniquity and I want you boys to keep away from there", replied Mother.

"What's a den of inickety?" asked the boy.

"It's a terrible place where they drink that terrible whiskey and fight — so never go near the place", was Mrs. Fenwick's ominous warning.

But boys being boys, young George did go into Walper's saloon. Young George had acquired a cheese sandwich from the bar and Mr. Walper handed him a mug of beer saying, "Here sonny, take this and quench your thirst."

"I don't want your old whiskey", was the reply.

"Whiskey, ho, ho, ha, ha, why that's good old lager beer", Walper told the boy.

Fenwick no doubt recalling his mother's warning was about to pour the contents of the mug on the floor when a hand shot out and snatched the glass. 'No you don't, sonny', and a gnarled old farmer drained the mug.

The Walper Hotel had a reputation for being a wild place. It was referred to as "a noisy saloon". The Times carried an item in 1873 which illustrated the noisy nature of the saloon. It seemed that 'a couple of navvies who had been away with the volunteers" stopped in at the hotel. They eventually became drunk and noisy and started fighting. During the fight 'one of them named McDonald had his nose bitten off by Bruce Brownlee". Dr. Morden tried to repair the 'hanging flesh and bone'.

Attached to the south end of the hotel was the store operated by Trick and Currelly. Thomas Currelly had come to Exeter some time in the 1860's or early 1870's. Currelly's wife was a Treble whose family had come from Devonshire. Currelly's son, Charles T. Currelly became the first curator of the Royal Ontario Museum

and a world renowned archeologist. In his book "I Brought The Ages Home", Currelly has the following harsh words about Exeter's hotels:

> "There were four hotels where the board was three dollars a week, or a dollar a day for transients, and where the main living was made by selling beer and whiskey. The hotel keepers were socially outside the pale and, I think, deservedly because a more contemptible crowd it was hard to find. The wholesale liquor people who did business with them said that theirs was the hardest, meanest trade it was possible to imagine. A few loafers hung around the hotels, and the only time I ever saw a man horsewhipped was when an old, lame, enormously fat hotel keeper horsewhipped a strong young man. Though I was only five or six years old, I can remember this young man crying while the big horsewhip came down rhythmically across his back and legs."

Currelly is being overly harsh and is no doubt using the one hotel to make an unwarranted generalization. The hotel he talks about is most surely the Walper Hotel since the young Currelly would not likely be wandering from Francistown a mile or more to the site of the other hotels. Who the fat hotel keeper was is difficult to say. Abel Walper sold out to Martin in 1877 and Martin sold to L. W. Gudwig in 1884. Gudwig had plans to erect a brewery on Fenwick's property and since he was manager of Carling's Lager Beer Department he knew the business. However, this industry did not develop. Later on another Walper operated the hotel. In 1892 the hotel was renovated and painted.

Currelly as a boy not only had the goings on at the hotel and the mill to watch he also had Digory Braund's blacksmith shop and Alex MacPherson's Wagon Shop next to the store to provide a summer day's occupation. Braund, by the way, was the first organist at the Bible Christian Church in Exeter.

As the nineteenth century came to a close, the Exeter North Hotel ceased to be the wild noisy establishment that it was for thirty years and became a Temperance House first under Leonard McTaggart's ownership and then John Morley's. It was eventually sold to George Armstrong who tore part of it down. Les Gibson tore the rest of the building down when he erected a service station on the corner.

It was in the Walper Hotel that Lancelot Hardy, a long time Reeve of the village, scared a poor tramp half to death. Hardy and his cronies were sitting around the saloon when some fellows dragged the tramp before Hardy's table. Hardy held a mock court and ordered the tramp on pain of tar and feathers, never to set foot in Exeter again. The tramp was last seen running north towards Rodgerville as fast as he could run.

The Walper Hotel then provided a colorful chapter in the history of Exeter. One comment should be added to Currelly's view that the hotel keepers were some kind of monsters. It is clear that in Exeter this was not generally true. Hotel keepers like Oke, Acheson, Hawkshaw, Leathorn, and others were among Exeter's leading citizens and not in the least deserving of Currelly's condemnation.

2. The Royal Hotel

This inn was located in "the heart of the business part of Exeter" where the Bank of Nova Scotia and Squire's house is now located. It was a large, frame structure and had been built in the 1860's or even the late 1850's. It was a stage coach stop until the railway ended the London Road stage run. The Donnellys used the Royal as their Exeter headquarters for their stage operation. During the years before 1876 it was called the Union Hotel and was owned by E. J. Wilkins. In 1875 it was called the Britannia House and was operated by John R. Wilkins who sold it on May 18, 1876 to E. Christie who renamed it the Royal. Christie sold it to Richard Atkinson but seems to have got it back again by 1878. In 1883 it ended its life as a hotel when Christie sold it to Mr. Senior who used it as a photographic studio. It was used by various businessmen for various purposes until 1922 when Mr. Hooper purchased the old building and shortly thereafter tore it down.

3. Commercial Hotel

One of Exeter's early important businessmen E. Drew built this hotel about 1860. In the early 1870's it was acquired by John Hawkshaw who had previously operated a stage line which ran stages to London, Clinton, St. Marys and other points. More has been said elsewhere about the stage line. After he acquired the hotel he still retained a great interest in horses and owned many fine racers. John Hawkshaw died in the 1920's at the age of ninety two. The "Times" commented that besides being an Anglican and a Conservative, he was a "well informed and highly respected resident". John sold the hotel to T. W. (Wes) Hawkshaw in the 1880's. Wes became a cigar salesman when he sold to W. Hawkshaw in 1901. In 1904 a Mr. Hanham purchased the business. In later years it was operated by Thomas Newell who was in 1914 the subject of the year's most talked about trial in Exeter. He was brought before not one, but three magistrates, — W. D. Sanders, Joseph Hawkins, and J. Moir — on a charge of selling intoxicants to minors. The charge was dismissed when Newell proved that he was serving only 'pop' and 'local option beer'.

It was said that the Commercial in the 1880's had the most "obliging chambermaids" in Exeter. One named "Rosie" was especially noteworthy.

The Commercial Livery and Feed Barn was located across the road where the Beverage plant is now situated. A man could stable, feed and water his horse for fifteen cents at the Livery barn. A garage was erected years later on the site.

C. B. Snell eventually acquired in 1916 the Commercial Hotel and converted it to other business operations about 1920.

4. The Metropolitan Hotel

This one was located at the corner of Main and "Station" Streets and was built some time after the railway came in 1876. The first station was at the end of the street and the owner, no doubt, hoped to attract station business and London Road business. There was a farmers' grain market across the road where the grocery store now stands. Here men like Lance Hardy, Cobbledick, Spicer and others would negotiate grain purchases. Undoubtedly, transactions were completed over a drink in the Metropolitan's barroom. Mr. Johnson's little repair shop was Cobbledick's office and a story is told of how Lancelot Hardy is supposed to have put a cow in the office one night. Cobbledick discovered the shambles in the morning and was furious but he evidently never did find out who did it.

Various people owned this hotel including W. Zinger, Henry Cantelon, W. Anderson, and James Campbell. The last owner was Mr. Smith who closed out the building's history as a hotel in the 1930's. In 1937 it became a chick hatchery, somehow this seems like an ignominious end for a hotel. The old hotel was torn down in 1970.

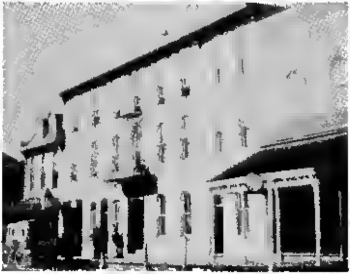
5. The Mansion House

The Mansion House was built in 1874 by R. Bissett for W. Hawkshaw on the corner of Main and Huron Streets. It was thirty-four feet by forty-six feet and had accommodation for thirty-five guests. It was "fitted out in great taste." Hawkshaw sold it to a Mr. Brimacombe who sold it in 1890 to "Squire" Robert Leathorn. The Squire was a town character, he generally headed the parades "astride a white horse" followed by the band. After Leathorn, James Shaddock and Charles Wilson were owners of the hotel. In 1902 the advertisements said "This house is all that a first class dollar a day house should be." The hotel was torn down in 1912 and three houses were erected in the place where it stood by Wesley Snell and Arnold Marchand.

6. The Exeter Station Hotel

This was built in 1876 by James and George Willis on the site of a tavern stand owned by Isaac Carling who sold the site to George Willis. This hotel served the railway public for thirty years.

In 1906 it was known as Mitchell's Temperance House and it was sold in that year to the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company who tore it down in order to erect the factory



The Central Hotel and Stage Coach about 1880

7 The Central Hotel

James Oke acquired this Exeter's most well known and "commodious" hotel in the mid 1870's This hotel had previously been operated by W E Wilkins who may have built it in the early 1860's It came to be known by Western Ontario's travelling public as having an excellent dining room with "attentive waiters who anticipate your wants" It advertised "the best wet goods and cigars" and was "from a sanitary point of view unexcelled" With "attentive hostlers", a genial clerk — John Mallott — and a first class bartender — Thomas Oke — the Central did a fine business Of course, it was not free from some criticism Occasionally there were "too many drunks" in the barroom and sometimes the bar did get noisy but usually the Central maintained its good reputation

On December 13, 1888 the Hotel was sold by James Oke to Joseph Acheson's two sons James and Thomas It will be remembered that Joseph Acheson was one of Exeter's first businessmen opening the second store to operate in Exeter It will also be recalled that Joseph Acheson presented the town with Victoria Park in the 1880's The old Acheson house was directly across the street from the Carling home and was demolished when the present nurses' residence was erected in 1957. The house had been occupied over the years by several prominent citizens, Mr. Rollins, the Grist Mill owner, A. E. Bennett, J. A. Stewart, R. N. Rowe, William Penhale and Dr. Steiner. Thomas Acheson was the father of Charles and Amelia Acheson the last owners and operators of the Central Hotel. The Acheson brothers paid twelve thousand five hundred dollars for the hotel and were according to the Times "young men of ability being endowed with enterprise and indomitable zeal for all things pertaining to public welfare". Shortly after the purchase, W. T. Acheson married Florence Oke in the hotel. The Times remarked that it was "a brilliant evening at the Central".

W. Thomas Acheson sold the hotel in 1924 to a Mr. Chester Lee after thirty-five years in the hotel. W. T. Acheson died in 1934 at the age of seventy eight. In 1928 Lee sold the hotel to Edward Lowry having purchased Fitton's store and adding additional rooms over the store. Fitton's was in the old Fanson block. In the 1930's Homer Bagshaw owned the hotel. It eventually came back into the Acheson family who operated the hotel until the 1960's when it was removed after one hundred years of service, by the British Mortgage and Trust Company. Although no legal drinks were served in the hotels of Exeter after May 1, 1915 it was said that a thirsty man could assuage his thirst in the old Central Hotel back room, but naturally that is pure speculation.

So the end of an era came in the 1960's when the wreckers tore the Central down. Only the echoes of conviviality and occasional rowdiness remain to remind us of the days when "Exeter the dry" had up to seven tap rooms in the hotels of the village to provide places of entertainment and amusement for the men of the village.

As we have noted then from the earliest times of settlement in Ontario right down to the present day the consumption of spiritous beverages has been a major past time of the populace. Drinking was so common that one student of Upper Canadian history arrived at a consumption figure of something like thirty gallons of whiskey per person per year in the period 1830-1860. This seems like a considerable quantity but the hotels did do a flourishing business and even in a small village like Exeter the ratio of hotels to population would be high. At the time of the maximum number of operating saloons in Exeter the ratio would be of the order of one hotel for every two hundred and fifty men, women and children. And in addition to Exeter's hotels there were inns in Crediton, Khiva, Sarepta, Rodgerville, Brucefield, Elimville, Flanigan's Corners, Adare, Farquhar, Devon, Dashwood, Zurich, Hensall and in many other places only a few miles from Exeter. Not only did the hotels dispense beer, whiskey and other "fine wet goods" but many stores carried liquor, wine and beer. The best known stores in Exeter to sell spirits over the years included Isaac Carling's store, Maoes' Grocery and Liquor Store, F. J. Knight, Herseys Store, Farmer Brothers, Browning's Drug Store and perhaps others. In 1873, by-law No. 2 of the Village of Exeter established licence fees of forty-five dollars for stores to sell liquor in "quantities not less than one quart". The licence fee for a "Tavern, Inn, Alehouse, Bar-house, or other place of Public Entertainment" was thirty-five dollars. Even with all of these available sources illicit stills were set up on farms to produce yet another supply of whiskey.

For decades and decades 'booze' was cheap and plentiful in Ontario; twenty-five cents for a gallon was the common price for whiskey and it was noted that the Sarepta Hotel sold it for nineteen cents a gallon. In 1925 James Sweet was eighty-five years old and in an item in the London Free Press, Sweet recalled how he had been employed to carry whiskey and water to labourers working on improving the London Road. "Whiskey of the best could be procured for twenty-five cents per gallon and was carried in a pail with a mug attached and every man helped himself. With regard to the harmlessness of the product he named a number of men known to him who lived to be over eighty-five and even over ninety and were never known to do without it." Whiskey and Methodism assuaged the lonely souls and aching backs of Ontario's rural population. Both numbed the hardships of early life in Upper Canada.

Despite the prevalent and widespread use of whiskey, liquor offences did bring heavy fines and sentences. In 1867 in Goderich "convictions made by His Majesty's Justices of the Peace within the United Counties of Huron and Bruce" were noted in an article appearing in the London Free Press in 1854. Some of the penalties are briefly indicated below.

> "James McCarroll was convicted of selling liquor without a licence and was fined twenty dollars. In the remarks column it was noted that the fine was not paid and McCarroll was sentenced to fifteen days at hard labor. ... Philip Nunn was convicted of acting as a brewer without a licence and fined forty dollars. ... Thomas Smith was convicted of selling liquor without a licence and was fined forty dollars.
>
> The usual fine after conviction on a charge of being drunk and disorderly was one dollar. But it was a different matter to be drunk on the Sabbath. ... That cost twelve dollars."

'Charivaris' were other occasions of drunken behaviour. Indeed this rural Ontario custom was declared illegal in Exeter in 1873. By-law No. 13 of that year provided for a fine of one dollar to ten dollars or ten days in the gaol for "taking part in or aiding or abetting" a charivari. There was a charivari in Exeter in 1902 on

Huron Street that caused considerable number of complaints. Special constables were sworn in to restore order. Council was severely criticized, then, for going to the extra expense of hiring special constables. The Rev. C. W. Brown was particularly angry about the incident. As is well known however, the reaction to widespread drinking came to besotted Ontario. The Methodist Church was always anti-liquor and made much of people's decisions to give up drinking. For example John Carrol writes: "And then and there I found the resolute purpose not to touch another glass of ardent spirits, and I received strength to keep my purpose, giving up whiskey, rum, shrub, peppermint, beer and cider ... I also eschewed the harmless spruce, or root beer. In the 1870's the Temperance Lodges and Associations began to flourish. The Women's Christian Temperance Union is a relic of this period. The other groups, such as the Royal Templars of Temperance (in Exeter it was the Advance Council No. 207), The Sons of Temperance, the Huron County Temperance Convention, the United Temperance Association were well represented in Exeter and area. The purpose of these groups was "to rescue the perishing, restore the fallen and keep unsullied from the destructive influences of those whose energies are bent in leading astray the youth of our land ... and to battle against the evils of strong drink."

The general pattern of the lodges was to hold regular business meetings and from time to time hold open public sessions with temperance oratory, readings, and temperance songs. It was said that "school teachers were, with few exceptions, active and influential members, leading many of the younger generation into these training schools for good citizenship."

In Exeter the Temperance Lodges enjoyed the support of some of the leading citizens. The Exeter Division, Sons of Temperance in the 1880's included in its list of officers: R. Pickard, E. Bell, H. Harwood, R. Crocker, J. Gould, Charles Snell, W. Shirray, and R. Seldon whose title was "Wattin Patriarch." The Royal Templars of Temperance, Advance Council 207 included as officers, J. E. Tom, J. P. Clark, Miss E. Graham, I. Gregory, R. Gidley, R. E. Pickard, O. Guard, W. Manning, Miss Bell.

These two organizations with, naturally, the help of the clergy who preached regularly on the vice of liquor drinking led Exeter's march to sobriety. The Sons of Temperance held monthly penny readings in Fanson's Hall; they held periodic public presentations in Drew's Hall. One such public meeting was held in January 1875 when a diminutive (5'4" tall) man with "long, waving ringlets" named Carswell, waxed eloquently for one and one-half hours in the cause of Temperance. "The band turned out in full force and played a few appropriate tunes." These Temperance sessions

provided an evening's entertainment. The Royal Templars brought a famous group known as the Temperance Evangelists to the village in 1893. How much actual reduction in drinking the groups achieved is difficult to say but they did provide cheap amusement for many people.

Another antidote to the widespread drunkenness was the 'quick cure'. Advertisements appeared in the 'Times' and the 'Advocate' urging the readers to try C. C. Beer's (M.D.) cure. His advertisements were headed: "DRUNKARD STOP" and was followed by the notation that Beer's had a "harmless cure for intemperance which can be given without the knowledge of the patient, also one for the opium habit". "Tasteless Samaria Prescription" was another miracle cure. This product usually had advertisements which began:

"Her husband was a Drunkard"
"A lady who cures her husband of His
Drinking Habits writes of Her Struggle
to Save Her Home"

Then followed a "Pathetic Letter" explaining how "Tasteless Samaria Prescription" worked a miracle cure and stopped her husband's drinking. Other advertisements drew attention with "She Patiently Bore Her Disgrace" or "Her Father was a Drunkard".

Despite the noble efforts of the churches, the lodges and the "cures" people still got drunk. Indeed, in the summer of 1884 a traveller noted that "Exeter was the worst town in Ontario for loafers and loiterers hanging around the hotels and saloons". Also in that warm summer of 1884 much local interest was shown in what was referred to as

The Drunken Frolic of the Sodomites

> Sodom a small community on the Lake Road had in the 1880's a few houses, and the Stanlake Saw Mill. One warm and pleasant August evening "sweet songs" were heard by the passers by. Some of Stanlake's men had been drinking all day — of course this was a continuance of their daily habits. As the "whiskey frolic" continued a problem developed. By 9 p.m. the whiskey was all gone and by God the nearest whiskey was three miles away presumably at the Walper Hotel. "The Stanlake brothers not having any extra fast horses were at a loss to know how to secure a fresh supply of whiskey in the quickest possible time." One of the boys, "the fire of craving burning within" made a bet he could run the three miles in fifteen minutes. Prior to his departure an eavesdropper heard the "sweet songs of Sodom" in the night. In a letter to the "Times" this eavesdropper said: "Let me give you a note or two. Sam Sile ... Sam Sile, then in a little lower tone, Gillis ... Gillis more grog more grog whiskey all gone."

Shortly after this the runner started out for Exeter, he was half-naked and certainly more than "half-stoned". It is uncertain as to the final result of the run history does not record his time if indeed he made the distance at all It was however suggested in the "Times" that in future the Sodomites keep cool and if a "hasty trip is necessary again" that a fast horse be taken rather than start out a man half naked. The writer went on to say

Come all ye Sodomites and learn
from the outcome of that night's frolic
not to touch taste, or handle the accursed stuff"

Perhaps the Sodomites did take this advice for the Sodom Temperance League was formed with Silas Stanlake Jr as President

There is humor in such nocturnal adventures as the Sodom Whiskey Frolic but whiskey caused more tragic incidents as well In the 1880's the "Times" reported the following "A man named George M abused his wife and infant in the Hay Swamp and cut Edward H's head open to the eyebrows with an axe. George was drunk when he did it

The governments of Canada and Ontario could not long resist the pressure of the Temperance movement Over the years Canada and Ontario passed more legislation concerning the liquor traffic than the average layman can sort out No survey of this legislation is possible here but a few illustrations of how Exeter reacted to some of the laws are given.

In 1884 and 1885 the great controversy in Huron County and Exeter was over the Dominion Temperance act more commonly referred to as the Scott Act The columns of the "Times" and the "Reflector" were filled with items opposing and supporting the Act This Act had to be voted in by the County or City jurisdiction The basic clause of the Act was as follows

> "No Person unless it be for exclusively
> sacramental or medicinal purposes or for
> bona fide use in some art, trade, or manufacture
> shall expose or keep for sale or give
> to any other person any spiritous or intoxicating
> liquor or any mixed liquor capable of being used
> as a beverage and part of which is spiritous or otherwise
> intoxicating"

Under the Act liquor could only be sold by druggists or specially licenced vendors A village like Exeter was permitted only one outlet In Exeter, Dr Browning's Drug Store was the licenced vendor and he could sell only to persons possessing medical certificates

In the local debate J J. White of the "Times" was editorially neutral but the "Reflector's" editor Mr Moir a former school teacher "pitted himself tooth and nail against" the act The "Reflector" supported the Crooks Act which provided for inns, taverns, hotels and houses of entertainment and shops to be licenced under standards set by a Commission. Both papers contained numerous articles and letters. The general feeling of the community can be obtained by a few references to these articles; they are certainly too numerous and lengthy to reproduce in full.

Some people felt that the Act was wholly "theoretical and fanciful", that it could not be enforced because "no temperance reform can be permanent till the people themselves resolve to be temperate". Others suggested that "men will get drunk just as long as fermentation continues to be a law of nature". One correspondent suggested that since there was only one drunk for every seven hundred males in the population it was unfair to deprive the other six hundred and ninety nine of the simple pleasure of enjoying a drink. The same writer who signed himself "Moderation" said that people need "a slight stimulus", therefore a little alcohol was better than having people turn to opium, morphine or chloral which he said women were already doing because it was frowned on if women took a drink.

But many others urged that the liquor traffic be destroyed, "drinking liquor is a species of self murder", "liquor is degrading, worse than useless, the greatest curse that ever man has been visited with". "Presbyterian" wrote in August, 1884 that "no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven which leaves the only other alternative of his taking up his abode where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth". Reference was made to the liquor "monster"; it must be "muzzled on principle of patriotism, Christian expediency", and a knife must be plunged through its heart. The liquor traffic must be destroyed forever was the theme of some letters.

Bishop Baldwin speaking to the Band of Hope said that "London ... is giving up young men every day to be eaten by the terrible serpent — DRINK — and sometimes young women too". He went on to say that liquor "encouraged idleness and destroyed the soul". The "man who keeps the rum shop has to face the curse. His traffic is the moral ruin of his neighbours ... his success is the moral degradation and ruin of the neighbourhood". "Protestant" wrote to point out that the Bible, however, provided support for the sale and use of wine; consequently, the Scott Act was contrary to the Divine Law.

It appeared, then, that "liquor was the greatest curse that ever man was visited with" or it was a positive benefit in that it provided a "slight stimulus" for those who needed a lift. One's viewpoint determined which of these positions was adopted. The writer who remarked that 70% of the people would violate the Scott Act was, of course, the most accurate observer. Perhaps the most bizarre comment was made at a meeting in the Drill Hall in October, 1884 when one man who opposed the Act spoke and said "it would retard the noble work of reforming Drunkards."

In any case the vote was held in Huron and the Act was voted in 7,029 to 3,813. In Exeter 262 voted for the Scott Act and 71 against. The effective date was May 1, 1885. During the two weeks previous to the date it is recorded that Exeter's liquor dealers did a huge business as the good people of the village stocked in as much liquor as they could afford in preparation for the long drought to come. After May 1, 1885 only Dr. Browning's Drugstore was lawfully entitled to dispense spirits and then only for clearly stated medicinal purposes.

After the Scott Act came into force the people of Exeter and area did not suddenly stop their consumption of spirits and turn solely to sarsparilla and tea. Exeter's constables Creech and Gill were kept busy raiding the hotels and private homes. Scott Act trials were common as hotelkeepers Hawkshaw, Oke, Brimacombe and others were brought to trial on charges of selling spiritous beverages. The frequent results was dismissal of the case since the witnesses swore that their host had served them no intoxicating drinks. Convictions were fewer than dismissals. In one raid in November, 1886 Constable Creech impounded a bottle of spirits found in one of the stables of one of the hotels. The hostler complained bitterly that it was his medicine prescribed for leg pains by one of the veterinarians of the village. So people despite the Act continued to drink. The defenders of the Scott Act said that certainly,

> "there would be drunks around since the
> liquor dealers deliberately made men
> drunk and sent them into the street
> to show the uselessness of the Act."

Besides it was noted that brandy could be made from wet saw dust and "what chance has prohibition got when a man can go forth with a rip saw and get drunk on a rail fence."

The raids continued in town and out. In Hensall Mr. B's driving shed was raided and the constables impounded 24 gallons of beer and 10 quarts of whiskey. Mr. B. said it was vinegar so the constables had to (obviously) sample the contents to be sure it was not whiskey. It is not recorded whether or not the constables needed assistance home. In another raid four constables raided Mr. C. E.'s pig pen and upon tearing up the flooring found over 400 gallons of whiskey. "The pig pen was inhabited by 8 pigs." The gentleman referred to as C. E. was himself a county constable and bailiff.

Clearly the Scott Act was not satisfactory. There was continued pressure for its repeal. The Exeter "Advocate" was strongly in favour of repealing the Act. Mr. Sanders, the editor, pointed out that

1 The Act was unenforcable
2. It injured respectable hotels and drew men to "low places".
3 It encouraged bad whiskey.
4 It was "a tyranny without parallel in British Law"
5 It was anti-Christian
6 "Neither science or scripture says that it is wrong to use liquor if it is not abused"
7 It punishes the seller instead of the drunkard
8 It encouraged a flourishing bootleg trade
9 The Drunkard would be reformed only by other means not the Scott Act

The pressure for repeal grew and on April 19 1888 the County voted to repeal the Act by a 1300 majority. After three years, then, the Scott Act was out and "The Union Jack was hoisted over all of the hotels" in Exeter. "British freedom and justice" had prevailed. Huron then came under the Crooks Act. This provided for the licensing of hotels and shops. In Exeter five hotels — the Central (Acheson), the Exeter North (S. L. Walper) the Commercial (Hawkshaw) the Mansion House (Brimacombe) and the Metropolitan (Orme) were licensed. Two stores were licensed Farmer Bros and S C Hersey (later bought out by F J Knight). By 1899 the saloon was abolished in Ontario and only hotels could be licensed. In Exeter the five hotels and the two stores continued to be licensed although around the turn of the century the Exeter North Hotel became a Temperance House leaving four licensed hotels which continued to operate until about 1915.

The Temperance Lodges continued to exist but by the early 1900's only the W C T U, the Huron County Temperance Convention, and the United Temperance Association seemed to exist in Exeter. The W C T U not only assaulted the liquor trade but also turned its attention to cigarettes. Mrs E J Spackman a local leader of the W C T U in the early 1900's said cigarettes were "heart wreckers" and "brain and soul wreckers". The Times had articles periodically attacking the triple threat — cigarettes, whiskey, and gambling. For example, in the February 8, 1900 issue was found:

> "Every boy of 12 or over knows that the confirmed cigarette smoker of tender years is on the road to the idiotic asylum or the grave.
> "Drink before 20 — by 40 a filthy drunken tramp"
> "Gambling leads to utter moral ruin"

The Advocate carried in January, 1900 the following item:

> "Those who smoke cigarettes should read and ponder the following. David Hurley of Paris Ontario 19 years old died from the effects of cigarette smoking. His father said the boy smoked $5.00 worth of cigarettes a week. He had shrivelled up until he looked like an old man. His lungs were in bad shape and his blood very thin. The physician opened the boy's arm and found that the main artery did not con-

tain a drop of blood, it had all dried up. The father requested that the case be made public to serve as a warning to other boys.

The local WCTU cited 3 cases of murder committed by teenagers in Toronto and Hamilton. All three of the teenagers smoked. Smoking clearly had contributed to their moral decline to the point where they committed murder. Cigarettes were legally sold in Exeter only in the hotels at one time. They were, however, available in some of the stores. One Exeter Old Boy reported that cigarettes "were kept in a drawer under the counter ... if the store keeper knew the customer well he reached down and sold the cigarettes." In 1901 there was a charge of $50 for a license to sell cigarettes.

The WCTU also complained bitterly about spitting on the sidewalks. Council in 1903 granted the Ladies use of the reading rooms from whence could come their periodic pronouncements.

The hotel keepers in Exeter suffered the final blow in 1915. On May 1, 1915 the Canada Temperance Act came into effect in Huron. On April 30 "the Central Hotel Bar closed at six o'clock that hostelry having sold out its entire stock of liquors." The Commercial was open during the evening and quite a number took advantage of the last opportunity "around the open bar". That was the end of legal drinking in hotels in Exeter. The bars never opened again. Various laws were passed in Ontario but Huron continued under the Canada Temperance Act. In 1921 Ontario voted for the prohibition of intoxicating liquors being imported into Ontario.

In the referendum Exeter voted 695 to 136 for prohibition. Most of the village's clergy were ecstatic. The Rev. M. J. Wilson said, "Thank God, thank God ... we have laid the foundation for civilizing, Canadianizing and Christianizing the incoming foreigner." The Rev. Mr. Foote's public statement was intoxicating in its verbosity and length but he concluded with "verily, we have witnessed a great triumph for righteousness". Only the Anglican rector, the Rev. Mr. Trumper was realistic. He said he did not believe in prohibition, that it was unworkable, unnecessary and he felt that the results would be far from satisfactory. The Rev. W. G. McAlister said that the vote would "gladden the patriotic heart of British Canadians". He suggested only 'foreigners' would vote against the legislation. The Loyal Temperance Legion made up of 63 children gave praise in the Main Street Methodist Church.

Temperance people held meetings throughout the 1920's. International temperance delegates came to Exeter to view the success of the Temperance movement in Western Ontario. W. D. Sanders, W. G. Medd, H. E. Huston, the clergy and others staged a banquet and rally.

During this period of absolute prohibition in Ontario in the

early 1920's, W. A. Balkwill was Exeter's Prohibition Constable. On one occasion, Constable Balkwill arrested two men driving a "powerful Paige car" laden with whiskey near Woodham. Balkwill had little trouble since the men were so drunk that they had run the car into a ditch. He impounded over 200 bottles of whiskey. On another occasion a large "eight cylinder Cadillac car" had tire trouble on the Thames road. The occupants were seen to bury some cases in a nearby field. The cases contained whiskey, which was seized but the men escaped. An odd 'case' came to light in 1922 near Dungannon. A burial, supposedly of a corpse from the steamer Greyhound, was about to take place when it was discovered that the coffin was full of whiskey. The undertaker and the minister were totally surprised — so they said.

In the mid 1920's Ontario ended its attempt at prohibition but Exeter remained dry since it was governed by the Canada Temperance Act. The situation was confused in Huron until 1946 when the Privy Council in London, England declared the C.T.A. to be valid in Huron, Perth, Peel and Manitoulin Island. Any liquor licenses in Huron were to be cancelled. There were none in Exeter. S. M. Sanders and the Main Street Church both urged that all liquor licenses be withdrawn. In a letter to the Times-Advocate Sanders said "abolish the beverage room completely and be done with that blight and curse to humanity". He was concerned with the "abhorrent women's beer parlors" and he felt our "brave soldiers" just returned would object to the country tolerating "such dens of vice".

The Huron County Temperance Federation was concerned that booze was being brought into the county by truck. The Federation commented on Seaforth's drinking habits and the "express traffic in liquor" into Exeter and Seaforth. Wingham was "one of the best towns — for drinking" but Clinton was "as clean as possible" but tut tut there was "considerable private drinking". All in all "Huron was the banner Temperance County". The Federation felt that teachers should be "total abstainers". At one point the M.L.A. for Huron, W. G. Medd, expressed the opinion "that persons who have liquor permits should not be given permits to drive automobiles". So Huron had its public expressions of temperance for years.

As a side note it is humorous to note that the W.C.T.U., being ever watchful, had occasion in the 1930's to petition Council against poolrooms. The Village had a by law against poolrooms but John Taylor operated one and he was taken to court. Later on it was decided that the bylaw was illegal. However, the W.C.T.U. said that "a poolroom is a curse in any town. It is there that the police always go when searching for criminals". "Poolrooms" said the ladies, "are the worst hell holes any town can possess" and they said "it is a well known fact that liquor is often sold in these resorts". Besides "gambling is associated with playing pool". The letter to Council was signed by Bessie H., Myrtle C., and Ella W. Fifty and sixty years ago, in order to play pool the "boys" would often skip school and go to Hensall to play.

In the 1950's efforts began to have the Canada Temperance Act repealed. In 1951 Reeves Cochrane of Exeter and Sills of Seaforth moved in County Council to seek its repeal. It was not, however, until 1959 that the vote to decide whether or not to repeal the Act was held. There was a good campaign in Exeter with the clergy, the Huron Temperance Federation and Bob Southcott leading the forces favouring the retention of the Canada Temperance Act. In print, at least, Don Southcott led the forces favouring repeal. "Democracy" said Donald, "permits the freedom to disagree even with the clergy". The temperance forces said that Huron "has a proud record of sobriety" and only the greed of the liquor interests would be served by repealing the Canada Temperance Act But it was apparent that the Act had outlived its usefulness, if it ever had any Elmer Bell took a bottle of liquor to church once to show that nothing could be done about possession and consumption of alcohol any place Huron voted 12 157 to 7 391 for repeal Exeter voted 763 to 480 for repeal

A Brewers Retail store and an Ontario Liquor Control Board store soon opened in Exeter but still there could be no restoration of hotels or beverage rooms. In 1963 Exeter held a liquor vote and the questions were all defeated but in the late 1960 s another vote was held and Exeter did vote yes for certain types of outlets

Exeter then lost the color which the presence of wet hotels lent to a small community over 50 years ago Exeter has had an ambivalent attitude toward drinking Its citizens probably did not drink any less than citizens of other small towns They did however, much less public drinking

This chapter has dealt with the hotels and with drinking and other so-called vices As an appendix to the chapter By law No one 1875 of the Village of Exeter is included to illustrate the village fathers' efforts at limiting or controlling 'sin'

1875 By-Law No One 1875

To make provision for the prevention of nuisances and immoralities within the Village of Exeter

The Council of the Corporation of the Village of Exeter enacts as follows

1 It shall not be lawful for any person or persons whatever to do any or either of the following on the Sabbath or Lord s day

subject to the penalty hereinafter imposed

1st To sell or expose for sale, or to purchase, trade or barter any wares, merchandizes, goods chattels or personal property whatsoever

2nd To do worldly labour business or work, with the exception of works of necessity or charity, conveying travellers and the mails and selling drugs or medicines

3rd To play at marbles quoits cricket, ball skittles, rackets, or any other noisy game, or to gamble with cards dice or otherwise

4th To run races on foot or horseback carriages or vehicles of any kind

5th To dance or play any profane music to the annoyance of any person

11 It shall be unlawful for any person or persons on any day, to do any of the following subject to the penalties hereinafter imposed

1st To sell or give away any spirits or intoxicating drinks of any kind to any child or apprentice servant, idiot, or insane person, without the consent of the parent, master, legal protector or physician of such child or person

2nd To openly expose or exhibit in any street, road highway, or public place within the said village of Exeter any indecent object, or openly or indecently to expose his or her person in any street road highway or public place within the said village or to put up any indecent placard writing or picture, or paint write or inscribe any indecent word or words, or make any indecent picture or pictures on any wall fence, tree or building or sidewalk or wilfully expose to view in any street road, highway or public place within the said Village of Exeter any obscene painting or indecent exhibition

3rd To utter any profane oath or oaths or any obscene, indecent, blasphemous or grossly insulting language, or to practice any other immorality or indecency in any of the streets, roads, highways or public places within the said village

4th To keep or maintain, or to be an inmate of any bawdy House, for the resort and commerce of lewd or dissolute people, or the practice of fornication or a house where lewdness indecencies or other grossly immoral or scandalous actions are purposly permitted or allowed or shall knowingly permit or suffer his or her house to be used as a bawdy house brothel or house of ill fame

5th For any common prostitute or night walker to walk in any

street road, highway or other public place within the said village

6th To gamble and win or lose any money, liquor or any other valuable thing or things, in playing at cards, dice, or other game of chance, in any tavern or public place in the said village, or use any subtle means craft or device to deceive or impose upon any of Her Majesties subjects

7th To be found drunk or disorderly in any of the streets, highways, or public places within the said village or to wander about and lodge in any house or outhouse or any deserted or unoccupied building or in the open air or in tents, or in any cart or wagon, not having any visible means of support, and not giving a satisfactory account of him, her or themselves

8th To race or drive furiously any horse or other animal either by itself or attached to a carriage or vehicle of any kind on any of the streets, roads highways or public places within the said village

9th To drive, ride, or lead any horse or other beast of burden on any of the sidewalks within the said village.

10th To keep or permit to be used in any building or place within the said village used occupied or controlled by such person, any Faro Bank Roulette table or other device for gambling whereon or with which money liquor or any other articles shall be played for and in addition to the penalty hereinafter imposed the said Faro Bank Roulette tables or other device for gambling, shall be seized and destroyed by the Officer or Constable authorized by the Convicting Justice or Justices

11th To bathe or indecently expose his or her person, by washing in any water lying or running near any public highway or dwelling house between the hours of six in the morning and eight o clock in the evening, unless provided with and clothed in a proper bathing dress sufficient to prevent any indecent exposure of the person

12th To keep or harbour any dog or dogs dangerous in their nature to man or beast or any dog or dogs that shall annoy the neighbourhood by barking, howling or biting, or shall in any way excite terror or alarm, by running at barking, biting or snapping at any person or team or beast passing or repassing the thoroughfares within the said village

13th For the owner or person in charge of any street to allow or permit the trying or covering of any mare or mares, unless in some enclosed place out of public view

14th To obstruct any of the streets or sidewalks of the said village

of Exeter with any commodity other than building material, or material for the making or repairing of the sidewalks, streets or bridges in the said village save and except loading or unloading goods and chattles in ordinary trade or commerce

III And be it further enacted That any person or persons who shall be guilty of any infraction or breach of any of the provisions of this By Law shall on conviction by any one or more of Her Majesties Justices of the Peace having jurisdiction in the County of Huron forfeit and pay for each and every such offence a price of not less than one dollar nor more than twenty dollars, in the discretion of the Justice or Justices convicting together with the costs of prosecution and in default of payment thereof at such time as the said Justice or Justices shall direct, the said penalty and costs, shall be collected by distress and sale of the goods and chattels of the offender or offenders, and in case of there not being sufficient distress found out of which the same can be made such offender or offenders shall be imprisoned in the County Gaol or Common Lock up house with or without hard labour for such a period not exceeding twenty-one days as the Justice or Justices convicting shall adjudge, unless such fine and costs shall be sooner paid And in the event of the said fine or penalty being received by the said Justice or Justices they shall pay the same over to the Treasurer of the Corporation of the Village of Exeter

IV And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for any Constable or Peace Officer having jurisdiction in the County of Huron, to apprehend any person or persons whom he shall observe committing any offence punishable under this By-Law who shall be unknown to such Constable or Peace Officer, or who shall refuse to give his name or address, or shall give a false name or address or one which such Constable or Peace Officer shall have reasonable cause to believe to be false and to take such offender, or cause him or her to be taken before the nearest Justice of the Peace having jurisdiction in the matter to be dealt with according to Law

V And be it further enacted that By-Laws No 15-1873 and No 11-1874 be and is hereby repealed and that this By Law shall take effect on and after the passing thereof

Passed February 8th 1875
JM Eacrett
Vill Clerk

George Willis
Reeve

chapter 4

Transportation

> *Dobbin remains for man the*
> *very kingpin of his prosperity*
>
> Exeter Times Advocate

> *The normal town horse produced between fifteen and*
> *thirty pounds of manure a day with*
> *the average being something like 22 pounds*

> *The evidence of the horse was everywhere —*
> *in the piles of manure that littered the streets*
> *attracting swarms of flies and creating stench*
> *in the iron rings and hitching posts in the*
> *numerous livery stables that gave off a mingled*
> *smell of horse urine and manure harness oil and hay*

In early Ontario we find, for the first time in Canada a system of roads being developed almost as soon as settlement began. It was a system which was planned in its broad outlines from the start' In Huron County as well as the rest of the Huron Tract a road system had been planned by the Canada Company It is true that the roads were not very good when the first settlers moved over them and it is also true that some settlers had to clear a roadway through the bush themselves before reaching their selected site for homesteading. Indeed, roads were not very good for a long time after the early settlers came. Nevertheless, there were roads to the outside world. The Huron Road and the London Road were the two principal arteries coming into Huron.

The south part of Huron County depended entirely on roads for contact with the rest of the province. There were no navigable waterways in South Huron; consequently, land travel was the only means available. Travel was somewhat easier in the winter than at other seasons and it was noted earlier that James Willis and some of the other early settlers had travelled into the region during the winter. The early roads were little more than tracks and were more easily traversed by sleigh in winter than by cart or stage in the other seasons.

The story of the early pioneer road building period and of the problems of early travel is well known and cannot be recounted here. It is enough for our purposes to comment that road construction through the Upper Canadian woods was arduous to say the least. It was hard, exhausting work. Fever and ague frequently struck, decimating work crews, and deaths were not uncommon. Whiskey was another problem that the road gang supervisors also had to deal with; stories of road crews prostrate from too much whiskey consumption are common. Once the actual clearing had been done the road was still little more than a stump-covered track. It required many years in most areas before the roads were any more than rough trails.

As far as the settlers in the Exeter area were concerned the main road and chief link with the outside world was the London Road. This road had been opened by the Canada Company from London to Goderich in 1832. The road was not logged or stumped for several years but settlers like Willis came up the road almost immediately. As was noted previously, McConnell was assigned to live at the half way point between Goderich and London and assume responsibility, on behalf of the Canada Company, for supervision of the road between Clandeboye (Flannigan's Corners) and Clinton. This half way point, of course, eventually became Exeter. The London Road was the Canada Company's second main road into the region, the first being the famous Huron Road from Guelph to Goderich. The Huron Road had been blazed in 1827. Roads like these cost in the area of 265 pounds per mile by the time that they had been logged and stumped. In 1841 control of all but the most important roads was transferred to the district councils by the province. With the passage of the Baldwin Act in 1849 county and township councils were made responsible for roads.

The London Road then was Exeter's main communications link with the rest of Canada. That part of the London Road from London to Elginfield through London Township was known as the Proof Line and had been surveyed in 1824 by Trinity Kilbourne. This section of road was purchased by a private road company, perhaps about 1840, and this company known as The Proof Line Company erected three or four toll gates along the road. The toll was ten cents at each gate. In 1850 Middlesex County tried to purchase the road but the price was too high. Middlesex abolished tolls on all of its roads in 1882 but the Proof Line Company continued to operate until 1907 when the road was finally purchased by the County. The section of the London Road in Huron County was significantly improved after it was assumed by the County of Huron although tolls existed on the road in Huron until 1873. There are not many sources of information regarding the tolls in this part of Huron. There are indications, however, of a toll gate existing at Devon; the toll keeper at that gate was a Mr. Henry Harris who died in Exeter in 1903. Other toll keepers in the area included John Potts, also at Devon, who lived in Exeter in the 1860's and William Taylor who also lived in Exeter. The location of the gate kept by the last named man is not known. Not much is known about the toll gates in the South Huron area but it is safe to assume that they would not have been any more popular here than they were elsewhere. Incidents involving toll keepers were common. For example, there is a record of a toll keeper in Bruce County being sent to jail for over charging. Farmers burned another gate near Dungannon. In 1873 the County of Huron abolished all tolls in the county and in the same year purchased the Northern Gravel Road Company's road from Goderich to Lucknow, a distance of twenty-two miles. This road was the last private road in the county.

In the Exeter area road maintenance and construction was the responsibility of the councils of the surrounding townships. Township minutes are filled with references to roads and ancillary works. One of the earliest such references is found in the minutes of the United Townships of Stephen, Usborne and Hay. On December 15, 1842 there is the following entry:

> "Received in London from Mr. Harris, Treasurer of the London District, a cheque upon the Bank of Upper Canada for the sum of £17 11s.0d. for the roads and public works in the Townships of Stephen, Usborne and Hay."

The money was handed over on December 23 by Township Clerk George Snell to William McConnell, the District Councillor. On January 9, 1842, the same sum was given by McConnell to Hugh Balkwill the new clerk. Presumably after all this movement

the seventeen pounds was eventually used to improve the roads.

Much of the work done on the roads in rural Upper Canada was performed by statute labour. This compulsory work on roads and bridges had been provided for in Upper Canada as early as 1793. In the Highway Act of that year it was mandatory for each man to provide up to twelve days a year labour. A few years later the statute labour requirement was changed and made proportional to the assessed value of the property. This system of statute labour "was devised to meet the requirements of early settlements, when a simultaneous opening of all the roads in a township was the thing most desirable. Its chief advantages were that under its working each ratepayer was permitted to do his share of the road building in his immediate neighbourhood and that he was able to pay his road tax in labour."

It is worth noting one or two details about statute labour in Usborne Township. The items selected are from By-law No. 6, 1854, Township of Usborne.

> "It shall be the duty of each overseer of highways ... to cause all Statute Labour within his division to be performed between the first day of June and the twenty fourth of July."
>
> "That any person liable to perform statute labour may compound for such duty, if he or she shall think fit on or before the first Monday in May by paying to the Township Treasurer the sum of 2/6d. for each day."
>
> "Every person liable to perform Statute Labour shall ... be obliged ... to work faithfully and diligently ... and shall bring with him such tools as he ... be directed by the overseer to bring ... allowing eight hours to each day's work."
>
> "... a day's work of a team and driver shall be reckoned equivalent to two days' personal labour of one man."
>
> "... and it shall also be the duty of the overseer to call upon any person of the age of 21 years and upwards ... to perform 2 days Statute Labour, although his name may not be on the assessment roll."

The by-law went on to provide for a fine of 5 shillings per day for neglect of the statute labour obligation. In 1857 the labour could be commuted for the sum of one dollar per day. It was compulsory for town dwellers to pay the commutation fee. Presumably the residents of the little village of Exeter who lived on the Usborne side would pay James Pickard or Hugh Balkwill, the pathmasters in the area, the commutation fee. Stephen residents would pay their pathmaster. These funds had to be expended by the pathmaster on the roads in his beat. Presumably the few village streets would be maintained by statute labour, although it is not clear how the townships handled Exeter's streets in the early years. After the village was incorporated the village council hired men for street work but prior to incorporation street work was the responsibility of the township concerned.

The same by-law mentioned above included a section "to prevent horse racing on the public highway" and provided a fine for offenders of 50 shillings. There were township regulations regarding the removal of fallen trees from the road, the cutting of timber for twenty-five feet on each side of the road. In the latter regulation trees in orchards or "any tree planted expressly for ornament or shelter shall be exempt". There were no directions to the Pathmaster to help him decide whether a tree was an ornament or a nuisance. Statute labour was gradually abolished in Ontario with Malden Township in Essex County being the first to end the system. Usborne Township abolished Statute labour in the late 1920's.

Road work was probably the chief concern of township councils. There is little information about the construction of the Lake Road or Thames Road but this road, now Highway 83 was probably built in the 1840's. There is some indication that the Lake Road was opened in 1839. The Exeter area was becoming sufficiently important by 1857 and 1858 for consideration to be given to road improvement to St. Marys. In January, 1858, agreement was reached between Usborne Township and the County of Huron and Bruce for the expenditure of $20,000 to grade and gravel nine miles "more or less" of road leading from the Village of Exeter to the Head of the Base Line of the Township of Blanshard", this would be at Woodham. If the cost exceeded $20,000 the township was to pay the excess. The price was to include culverts, toll gates, bridges and other ancillary items. The County was to "have full jurisdiction over the said road through Usborne, . . . and shall have the power of letting the tolls thereon". The County of Perth was expected to gravel from St. Marys to Woodham. This road would be the present St. Marys road over much of its length; the county directed that the road run straight from the first to the eleventh Concession between lots 10 and 11. The St. Marys and Exeter Gravel Road Company and the Gravel Road Company of Blanshard were somehow involved with this construction. These were probably joint stock companies such as those that existed all over Upper Canada at this time. Such companies were permitted to build roads and to charge for their use. Municipalities often held shares in such companies. The involvement in this project of the two companies mentioned, however, is not clear.

During these years from the early 1830's to the late 1850's the roads were gradually improved from sleigh tracks dotted with stumps, to mud and corduroy roads and finally on the main roads, at least, to gravel. At first travel over the early roads in the Exeter area was either by foot, by oxcart or by "jumper". Jumpers were home-made sleighs. The "runners were unshod" and the conveyance was used mainly over grass or rough ground and, of course, over the snow in winter. Ox carts were used almost exclusively from the early 1830's to the 1850's. James Handford remarked that "some men had from sixty to eighty acres cleared before they bought a wagon". The first team and wagon in the area was owned by the Case family who settled north of Exeter. The teams and wagons replaced the oxen over the next few decades and horses became the principal draught animals. Of course, in the early years, people walked a good deal too. Jim Handford recalled a trip he made to London with his uncle Jack Bissett in the 1840's. They walked to London taking one and one-half days to go. We mentioned earlier how Willis had walked to London. Farmers would commonly walk to the local grist mills carrying sacks of grain.

After settlement had thickened and roads had been sufficiently improved regular stage coach service became possible. Coaches at first were farm wagons with hard seats and no springs; by the 1840's and 1850's the coaches became somewhat more luxurious. Many were "painted in gaudy colours, many had glass windows, curtains and soft cushioned seats"; they carried from nine to sixteen persons. The Concord stage, built in New Hampshire was a famous make of coach at this time. Their speed was varied depending on the road but average speed was eight to ten miles per hour. Horses were changed every fifteen miles at the numerous inns along the roads. The inns of this area like the rest of Upper Canada were often scenes of "wholesale brawling and drinking". South of Exeter there were many inns including Quick's Black Horse Inn and Balkwill's Tavern.

The stage coach provided the Exeter area with its most rapid transportation connection to the outside world. Stage service evolved in the area gradually. The Canada Company provided a regular service over the Huron Road but it was the mid 1840's before regular stage service existed along the Huron Road to Goderich. Regular service on the London Road probably did not exist before the late 1850's although some stage service was provided in the early 1850's. Some of the early drivers included Jack Quick and William Geary. Drivers were romantic figures in those days but often were hard drinking, tough characters. Drunken drivers became "at times a menace to the travelling public". They were paid ten to twelve dollars per month. One traveller in 1856 noted that Exeter was "neatly built up" but travel up the London Road in 1856 was still far from good especially north of Elginfield. The Proof Line to Elginfield was good but the road apparently deteriorated north of that point. The fare to London in the 1850's was fifty cents return "over the most terrible roads, and passengers had frequently to get out and walk", said John Stanlake who in 1924 at the age of eighty reminisced about the early days. The roads gradually improved, however, and so did the coaches. By the 1860's and 1870's there were a number of stage lines operating in the area. For example, out of Lucan were lines run by F. R. Jennings, S. S. Armitage and, of course, the famous Donnellys. Out of Exeter, "Hawkshaw's Stages", advertised as "The Favorite", served the travelling public with "the fastest and most comfortable stages in the province". John Hawkshaw said he offered "good horses, comfortable stages and the most accommodating drivers". Hawkshaw's chief driver was William Brooks who was killed in an accident in 1875. The description of the accident is given below since in this one incident it is possible to illustrate so many aspects of stage coach travel. The description is from the *Exeter Times*.

> "On Friday morning last, Mr. Wm. Brooks ... left Exeter at 4 a.m. the usual hour, having quite a number of passengers. ... All went well until nearing London and going down the hill at Mt. Hope, when Donnelly's opposition stage attempted to pass. Brooks then whipped up his horses and they sped along at a rapid rate and hurried their driver to destruction. ... The nut of the left fore wheel came off and the iron axle fell to the ground. Brooks was then dashed to the earth, and ... struck the whiffletree while falling."

Dave Johns was on the stage with seven other passengers. He explained that the passengers "tumbled out along the road". The horses were caught by a passer-by and Mr. Cobbledick carried Brooks to the city where three doctors, Hagerty, McKenzie, and Bratton tried to save the "poor man's life". Evidently "the stage which turned and backed several times while at Lucan had the nuts loosened, and the rapid motion given the wheels, while going down the hill, hurried them off". Once before Brooks had experienced the loss of the wheel nuts when they had been removed maliciously.

This deliberate tampering with the stage coaches was evidently not uncommon. Once in the summer of 1873 Hawkshaw had two stages waiting at the Britannia Hotel (possibly the Royal Hotel) to take people to the Barnum show that was in town. Mr. Hawkshaw had left them there over Sunday night and on Monday morning the wheels came off both stages as they headed towards the grounds where the show was located. Hawkshaw offered one hundred dollars reward for information leading to the arrest of the culprits who had removed the nuts. It could have been a competitor or it may have been some boys simply up to mischief. In 1875 Crawley and Flannigan's London stage was set on fire in front of the Mansion House in Exeter. This was another example of the unscrupulous behaviour of some of the competing lines.

In the early 1870's the stage time from Exeter to London was 4 a.m. with arrival in London at 9 a.m. The coach left London for Exeter at 2 p.m. and reached Exeter at 7 p.m. This was a daily service. There was also a daily stage for Clinton leaving at 5 a.m. and reaching Clinton at 10 a.m.; the return stage left at 2.30 p.m. and reached Exeter at 5.30 p.m. The round trip ticket for London was $1.50. The price was the same for Clinton. There was a stage for St. Marys leaving at 6 a.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

The mail was also carried by stage coach with Rattenbury of Clinton being the first to carry the Royal Mail on the London Road from Goderich to London and back. Other mail coaches carried the mail east and west. Some of the drivers on the Exeter to St. Marys run were Ted Davis, and James Shoebottom. Shoebottom was also the proprietor of a tavern. On one occasion Jim Shoebottom was late getting into Woodham. After a time the stage came up to Woodham post office "driverless". Searchers soon found Jim "dazedly wending his way" toward the village.

> "According to his story he had been held up by highwaymen ... the horses he said took fright at the shooting ... Jim claimed he got the better of the bandits after he succeeded in wresting a revolver away from one of them but when asked to produce the gun the best he could show was a pocket flask nearly empty."

It was said that "some were uncharitable enough to blame John Barleycorn for the holdup".

After the opening of the railway in late 1875 the passenger stages and mail stages that had operated the north-south runs along the London Road were obsolete. The railway took over this function but mail, freight, and passengers continued to be hauled by stage and wagon on the east-west roads from Exeter until the coming of the motor vehicle.

Henry Guenther was one of the later stage operators. He met the morning and evening train in Exeter. He charged fifty cents for the stage trip from Exeter to Grand Bend. He also called at the hotels. Guenther's stages ran from Exeter to Dashwood, Grand Bend, Parkhill and so on. Henry died in 1913 leaving his son Earl to run the operation which grew into a large school bus and transport operation. The Guenther transport line with twenty-one trucks amalgamated with the Tuckey line of nine trucks in 1952. Earl Guenther still operates the school bus line known as Exeter Coach Lines. So both Guenther-Tuckey transport and Exeter Coach Lines are direct descendents of Henry Guenther's stage lines.

In 1899 the Dashwood - Exeter stage was run by P. McIsaac who had the mail contract. He also carried passengers and freight. Henry Hoffman also ran a stage from Exeter to Grand Bend in the years before and after World War One. There was some stage service on the London road too. "Cap" Howard operated a stage line between London and Lucan long after the railroad came. Howard

had succeeded "Long John" Hodgins. It would appear, however, that Hawkshaw's line did not run much after 1876 and the coming of the railway.

The railway came to Exeter in late 1875 and so began a new era in the history of the village. The railway, with its rapid movement of large numbers of people and great quantities of freight was the symbol of nineteenth century technological progress. The citizens of Exeter believed in progress which was the style of their times and it was going to be many decades later before voices questioned the whole idea of progress and the value of technological achievements. The black smoke and the wail of the locomotive symbolized the greatness of human achievement in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The first train, a twenty car freight train, passed through Exeter from London on a Friday morning, December 11, 1875. This was the culmination of work which had begun in 1871, when gentlemen like John Carling, C. P. Smith, G. Burell, William Glass, Alex Johnston and Isaac Carling formed the London, Huron and Bruce Railway Company to promote construction of a line from London to Wingham. The London, Huron and Bruce Railway Company was incorporated on February 15, 1871 with a capital stock of $104,250. After many difficulties and deals the Directors of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway, in 1874, entered an agreement with the Great Western Railway of Canada. The Great Western would construct and lease the London, Huron and Bruce Railway. The Directors had worked "indefatigably" and had overcome "obstacle on obstacle" to "accomplish this great desideratum". Much of their work had consisted of getting finances. The Government of Ontario was to grant $2,000 per mile but granted a total of $178,630, and each municipality on the line made a grant. London granted $100,000; it was felt that London needed to "obtain intercourse by railway connections with the northern country". Usborne granted $25,000, Stephen $10,000, and Exeter, according to By-law No. 11, July 21, 1873 and a subsequent vote of the people granted $10,000 to the railway. The incorporation of the Village of Exeter was brought about partly, at least, so that another municipality would exist on the line to grant a subsidy to the railroad. Indeed all of the municipalities to be served by the line subsidized the construction to the total extent of $311,500. The Great Western Railway for some time resisted the idea of building the line to Wingham; the Great Western Board wanted to stop at Blyth. There was concern that the London, Huron and Bruce would adversely affect the trade of the Wellington, Grey and Bruce line which already had been built to Wingham. However the Great Western Railway finally agreed to construct the "line of sixty nine miles extending from London Junction (Hyde Park) on the main line in a northerly direction to Wingham a station on the Wellington Grey and Bruce Railway" The Great Western Railway was to "receive the municipal bonuses and the Government subsidy granted in aid of its construction" The Great Western Railway shareholders were largely in Britain and the Great Western agent who dealt with the London Huron and Bruce was a Mr Childers The total cost of construction to the Great Western was "between 160,000 and 170,000 pounds'

Exeter was the most important town on the London Huron and Bruce Railway and when the Grand Opening was held in London on January 20 1876 there were more people there from Exeter than from any other municipality on the line Perhaps the larger delegation was due to the importance of Exeter Perhaps the Times was right when it remarked "Enterprising Exeter the hustlers for trade" Perhaps it was the free booze who knows now In any case, when the train which had been dispatched by the Great Western Railway from London to Wingham to pick up the guests almost fifty of Exeter's leading citizens boarded the train The train left Wingham Tuesday morning and the following description appeared in the Times

> "On Tuesday morning after the arrival of the early train from Kincardine which had on board a number of prominent men of that town who joined the train at Wingham the iron bonds were loosed and down, down through the country over hills and through vales past beautiful farms swept the speeding train Leaving Belgrave which promises to be an important point we sped on until we reached Blyth Londesboro Clinton Brucefield Kippen Hensall stations were left behind and Exeter reached If ever Exeter's cheeks grew red, it was on that day for laudatory praises as to its beautiful surroundings, prominence and importance sprang from the lips of nearly all on board The only hindrance to a perfect view of the village from the station is a small piece of woods which intercept the site; but we understand Mr Carling intends removing it Eventually London was reached the trip was made in six hours"

Exeter's delegation is listed since it will provide a review of who some of the prominent men in town were in 1876 The list is as follows

D Johns
J Bell
S Tait
R Davis
M M Rosebrugh
W H Verity
W Case
G Griffith

I Carling
J W Broderick
J Cruonican
J Drew
W Drew
T Fitton
T Coates
W Grigg

A Lewis
R Manning
S Hogarth
G Mace
J McIntyre
J Acheson
J Pickard
R Pickard
C Southcott
G Sanders
S Sanders
Stanley and Jermyn
G Willis
J Oke

A Socks
T Lively
W Hawkshaw
Dr Hyndman
B V Elliott
G Waldren
W Trott
J Treble
W Fanson
J Thorne
C Eacrett
M Eacrett
G Eacrett
A Skinner

These good gentlemen of the village with hundreds of others were welcomed in London "in right royal style" The "choicest of music discoursed by the 7th Battalion Band which indisputably holds as a band one of the highest positions in Canada' was provided 'On the approach of the train a salute was fired by Major Peter's Battery of Artillery" London was gaily decorated "Exclamations of surprise and ejaculations of wonder were emitted from the visitors At 7 o'clock in the evening the banquet began in city hall which was tastefully decorated The caterers Conklin and Moore had "filled the tables with the choicest that the country could produce' The speeches and the evening went on and on One remarkable feature was the endless number of toasts By way of illustrating who was important toasts were proposed to the following Queen Victoria, The Prince of Wales The Princess of Wales The Army The Navy and Volunteers The Governor-General The Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario The Parliament of Canada, The Government of Ontario Thomas Greenway M P South Huron Mr Farrow M P North Huron Thomas Gibson M P East Huron By this time the party was becoming noisy and Mr Gibson sang The Red White and Blue But the toasts went on — Mr Bishop MPP Success to the London Huron and Bruce Railway a silent toast to the Dead proposed by John Burell Prosperity to the Great Western Railroad Mr Broughton General manager of the Great Western Railroad the municipalities the guests the agricultural interests the Mayor of London The hall was getting so noisy by this time that no one was really listening to the toasts but still more were proposed — the commercial interests, the manufacturing interests the Press Huron County Clandeboye (formerly Ireland and Flannigans Corners) newly named by the railroad in honor of the Earl of Dufferin and so on It is not recorded what the gallonage for the party was but it must have been sub-

stantial with 650 guests drinking steadily throughout the evening. There were about thirty toasts which alone would drain great quantities.

So the railway was well christened in January, 1876, although apparently there had been an earlier celebration in Exeter in late summer or fall of 1875 at the station when the two construction gangs, one from Wingham and the other from London met at Exeter where a gold spike was driven to complete the line.

As mentioned above a freight train made the initial run on December 11, 1875. The passenger service began in January, 1876 and continued until 1956 when the last passenger car was removed. The freight service, however, still exists on the London, Huron and Bruce Railroad to Clinton but for most of the year now the service is a three times a week "road switcher service". In the past there were three trains a day up to Wingham and three trains a day back so the old London, Huron and Bruce Railroad, now run by the CNR has reduced service very considerably. In 1941 the service was discontinued from Clinton to Wingham. As long ago as 1917 the passenger service was being reduced. The London, Huron and Bruce Railroad had a history of prosperity from 1876 to the turn of the century but since then the story has been one of gradual decline.

In 1875, though, almost everyone regarded the railway as a great boon to increasing industry and business and it was true that places on the railway did acquire an impetus to growth while places that were not on the railway declined. Exeter had a period from 1876 to 1892 of very significant growth. The town doubled in population from about one thousand to a little over two thousand in those sixteen years. It was not entirely due to the railroad but the railroad did contribute. But not quite everyone welcomed the line. The telegraph poles which accompanied the line were cut down near Clandeboye and logs were placed over the tracks in Morris Township. But generally the people of Huron regarded the line as their rapid connection to the rest of the country.

The construction of the line through the village of Exeter occurred in the summer of 1875. Most of the right of way was acquired from Isaac Carling who owned much of the land on the west side of town. This property was known as "Carling's Bush". Mr. Carling undoubtedly profited from the line's construction and he had been one of the promoters. He was personally generous and is supposed to have donated the land to the railway. It is difficult to determine how the right of way through Exeter was decided. Mr. Carling was involved with the railway from the beginning and whether he influenced the decision to go through the west edge of Exeter by his donation of land is not really known but he no doubt did contribute to the decision to go up the edge of the village. In any

case, it has proven over the years a real value to the town to have had the line go through what was for years the edge of the village and not through the centre. Sidings to the plow works and to the Harvey Bros. flour mill were proposed but again the long term benefits have been greater because they were not built than the short run benefit would have been if they had been built.

The Exeter Station on the London Huron & Bruce Railway This station was located on the West side of the tracks at this time This is probably the first station

The first railway station in Exeter was built west of the tracks and further north than the present station On the east side were grain storage sheds and storage sheds for peas from the pea storage sheds the youngsters stole peas for their shooters "isn t it awful" remarked the Times The facilities in Exeter erected in 1875 by the Great Western Railway included then a station and freight shed of frame construction 24 x 96 x 12½ in its dimensions There was a timber platform of 2 176 sq ft a bus platform 9 x 15 a passenger platform 207 x 4½ In addition there was a "closet" 7 x 14 x 8 two stockpens 31 x 39 and 23 x 29 In 1878 a frame section house 24 x 32 x 12 was constructed The first station agent was Charles Knight who was agent until 1900 In 1897 a frame water tank two stories high was erected at the station with a 19 030 imperial gallon capacity and more stock pens were added In 1895 a pumphouse had been built to draw water from the river and a well A new station was built in 1908 on the east side of the tracks This "depot" was one of the handsomest on the line On October 20 1911 the new station was burned "The fire was discovered about two o clock and the building was a mass of flames at that time, there being no possibility of saving anything The fire brigade was early on the scene and did good work in saving the surroundings among which were several cars, two, however, being partially burned —one containing potatoes and the other coal. A gun traveller, who had spent the previous day at the Dashwood shooting match, lost his supplies valued at $500. . . how the fire started is a mystery. There was no fire in the station at the time, and everything indicates that the fire was of incendiary origin". By this time the railway was under the Grand Trunk Railway's control and that company dispatched a car to Exeter for use by the station agent Mr. Knight.

The Present Station

During the construction of the railway employment was provided. The wages paid to construction workers were $1.25 per day, a man with his team earned $3.25 per day. A good deal of entertainment and amusement was given the populace of the village during the period when the railway was still a novelty. The novelty of the railway attracted the townsfolk and the Times was disturbed by the people who "desecrated the Sabbath" by putting a handcar on the track. The Times was more than disturbed, it was outraged. It was perfectly acceptable for people to take a walk, after church mind you, on a Sunday to have a look at the track but to actually put a handcar on the track and run up and down was shocking indeed. The Times said in September, 1875

> "There can't be much objection raised to lovers of pleasure taking a stroll along the tracks but when handcars are allowed to run upon the tracks on the Sabbath Day we think this is going beyond pleasure and the authorities should put a stop to it. Last Sabbath there were four of these handcars upon the track. There is a law preventing the desecration of the Sabbath.

About the same time, in 1875 two Wingham boys were drown-

ed on a Sunday when their boat capsized. 'Let that be a warning to ALL SABBATH BREAKERS,' said the Times. The railway meant new business for Exeter as well. The American Express Company opened an office in 1876. A telegraph office was also opened. This was the Great Northwestern Telegraph Company which opened offices in Exeter in 1875. One of the offices was in the north end of town but closed shortly after it opened, the other office was in Sander's store. It was later moved to the Sander's house on Main Street where Mary Sanders was the operator until 1920 when the Great Northwestern Telegraph Company was taken over by the Canadian National Railway. The telegraph office was then moved to the station where it remained until 1936 when N. J. Dore retired. The telegraph business was carried on by Dore in his house at the corner of Victoria and William Streets until 1946. The office was then moved to Centralia where it was maintained until 1966 when the Canadian National Railways' centralization process resulted in the closing of this telegraph office. Telegraph service for Exeter is now provided by the London office. There is some mention of the Montreal Telegraph Company having an office in Exeter in 1871 but the evidence is unclear concerning this office.

The section men and station agent lived in Exeter and the businessmen and farmers could now ship out their goods more readily. In the first year of operation, i.e. 1876, the Station Master in Exeter, Mr. Hayden, reported 9,342,742 pounds of freight forwarded and 4,686,661 pounds received. The station's revenue for freight and passenger service was $24,267.47 with almost $7,000 coming from passenger ticket sales. The London to Wingham time was three hours in 1876.

The line's profit from mid 1875 to January 1, 1876, i.e. the net revenue for the first six months operation was 371 pounds, 11 shillings.

On August 12, 1882 the Grand Trunk Railway and the Great Western Railway merged under the name Grand Trunk. Thus the London, Huron and Bruce Railway became a part of the Grand Trunk Railway system. It would appear that the operation of the London, Huron and Bruce after 1882 was not as efficient as it might have been. Complaints about the poor service and late trains appeared in the pages of the Times and the Advocate with increasing frequency. In addition to dissatisfaction with the service Exeter was never very happy with the location of the station. The feeling was in the village that the station should have been located in the centre of the town. There was frequent talk about constructing a "belt line" into the centre of the village but this of course was never done. In 1919 the Government of Canada acquired the capital stock of the Grand Trunk Railway and in 1923 the Grand

Trunk was amalgamated with the Canadian National Railway system

Over the years there were eight station agents assigned to Exeter The first agent was Charles Knight who retired in 1899 He was succeeded by his son John Knight who was transferred to Guelph in 1912 From 1912 to 1936 the agent was Norman J Dore who had previously been a travelling auditor for the Grand Trunk Railway. Dore was followed by Oliver Martin who was moved to Harriston in 1940 Fred Forrester served until 1946 He was succeeded by Ernest Cerson who operated the station until 1962 when he retired Cerson was followed by John McKee.

Over the years Exeter was considered to be "a very important station" In the early years a station staff of ten handled the incoming goods and the shipping of large volumes of agricultural products out of the area We have mentioned elsewhere in the book how heavy the traffic was in agricultural commodities in the early years By the mid 1930 s both passenger and freight traffic began to decline on the line In 1941 service was discontinued from Clinton to Wingham In 1955 the train stopped carrying the Royal Mail and in 1956 passenger service was discontinued The last passenger coach on the "butter and eggs special" was taken off on April 28 1956 William Wright was the engineer Les Blake the fireman and George Love the conductor, for this last passenger run Rail service on the old line is now very limited The Exeter station has been closed and the services centralized in London

Railways, then were the major form of transportation for goods and people in and out of Exeter for many decades There was always talk of expanding rail service For example in 1909 the CPR proposed a line from St Marys to Exeter, Goderich and Sarnia The Council expressed interest but the idea gradually died Great interest was shown in an electrified rail line from Exeter to St Marys. A radial line from St Joseph to various points near Exeter was proposed Various other proposals including electrification of the London Huron and Bruce were made during the period before World War One but none of the schemes materialized People like B W F Beavers, R G Seldon and the Harvey Bros., were strongly in favour of better rail service for Exeter but the war interfered with the schemes and after the war the additional railways seemed no longer so vital

With the coming of the railway the stage lines were certainly reduced in number but the horses were not by any means reduced in importance The horse continued to be the principal source of locomotion for most people for another fifty years and was not really eliminated from the farm and streets until after World War Two

The horse was the basis of a way of life and the basis of a whole economic structure. Blacksmiths, veterinarians, harness makers, livery stable operators, dealers depended upon the horse and when the horse ceased to be a major form of transport these businesses disappeared.

Exeter had its share of these various businesses based upon the horse. We mentioned the stage lines and these continued to operate until the coming of the motor vehicle. In addition to the stage lines there were the transport services within the village as well. Probably the most well known was the omnibus service of John Andrew Gillespie who, with his son, operated a coach service in town from the 1870's until his death in 1921. He met the trains and carried passengers to the hotels or to their houses. At first both the Commercial and the Central Hotels had their own "busses" to meet the trains but Gillespie reached an agreement with Hawkshaw and Acheson and ran a bus for both. Mr. Gillespie was known to take the occasional drop of elixir and at times this caused him some difficulty. One of these times he was taking Mr. C. V. Pickard's grandmother from the station to her residence on John Street (now Asa Penhale's apartment house). He backed his rig into three houses before he let old Mrs. Pickard off at the right house. Having finally found the right house he tipped his hat and lurched away. Mrs. Pickard, a staunch Methodist and a strong Temperance advocate, never rode in Mr. Gillespie's conveyance again. Gillespie acquired a new bus in November, 1903, "comfortably upholstered and up to date in every respect". He also operated a cartage and draying business with his son. When he died in 1921 after a long and colorful career on the village streets the Times reported that John Gillespie had finally "relinquished the reins and his spirit took its flight to that unknown world from which no traveller ever returns. The trip had no terrors for Mr. Gillespie for he was ready". In 1901 A. Cottle thought that he might provide some competition for Gillespie. Cottle in that year approached Council about the possibility of obtaining a ten year franchise for a street railway from the Mansion House to the Metro House and thence to the station. Nothing came of the scheme, however.

The livery barns were important businesses in the horse and buggy days. The livery man provided stable facilities for travellers, he rented horses and vehicles and generally provided service for the travelling public. The hotels all had livery stables of their own or had an agreement with one of the livery operators to serve the hotel. The Central Hotel had this latter arrangement. W. G. Bissett had a livery barn and poultry yard at the rear of the Central Hotel and provided the Hotel with stable facilities for the guests. Bissett opened his business about 1860 and operated it until 1911 when he sold out to George Crawley Bissett died in 1911 shortly after he sold the livery business He had been in business for over fifty years He had served on council as councillor reeve and deputy reeve for eighteen years Bissett was a "staunch Conservative" and Methodist The Advocate reported in his death notice that he was "impulsive at times but a warm heart and manly spirit made him a man among men, and no man mingled more freely with all classes of his fellow citizens" He was certainly Exeter's oldest businessman at the time of his death

Ed Christie operated a livery stable and provided the service for the Commercial Hotel William Snell was another liveryman in the village Thornton Baker had a livery barn on James Street across from what is now Russell's store Baker used to drive "commercial travellers" on their rounds to the various stores Salesmen would come in on the train and hire a horse and vehicle to take them around the country Baker took them "around the horn" which was the run from Exeter to Centralia Crediton Grand Bend Zurich Hensall and back to Exeter Another run was to Farquhar Elimville, Winchelsea Kirkton Woodham Baker's old livery barn was sold by Sandy Elliot to L Hodge of Staffa who tore it down in 1943

W J Beers Harness Shop about 1909
This shop stood where the Post Office is now located
Earl Cookson Maurice Quance W J Beer

The harness maker was another tradesman whose livelihood was dependent upon the horse The Eacretts Charles and George had been one of the early harness makers and saddlers in Exeter William Fanson owned another of the early harness shops in town In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century there were five harness making shops in the village The shops were owned by Mr. John Treble whose location was in the area where the Bank of Montreal is now, Mr. Gilbert House, and R. H. Sweet who sold out his boots, shoes and harness business in 1903 and migrated west. Sweet's shop was located south of Snell's garage on the Main Street. The other harness makers were W. J. Beer and Peter Frayne. W. J. Beer's shop had several locations; it was once located where the Post Office is now and later it was on the site of what is now Russell's store. Beer had learned his trade from Peter Frayne who was an institution on the Main Street for decades. Frayne was born in 1852 in Usborne Township; his parents were Robert and Margaret Frayne. He learned his trade in London and in 1876 he returned to Exeter to open his own shop. The building he occupied later became the P.U.C. building and then was acquired by C. Fairbairn. Peter Frayne married Mary Johnston in 1878 and the couple lived in a lean-to at the rear of the shop until he had saved enough to move to a house on Carling Street. As his business prospered he was able to build the house on Andrew Street later occupied by J. G. Stanbury. For forty-five years, from 1876 to 1921, Frayne opened his shop every day at 7 a.m. He worked from 7 a.m. until well into evening, although on Thursday evenings he closed the shop so that he could attend the prayer meeting at the Methodist Church where he was Recording Steward for thirty years and Superintendent of the Sunday School for seventeen years. Frayne also served on the school board for eighteen years. In 1921 after forty-five years, he sold his business to Maurice Quance who had learned the harness making trade from W. J. Beer having started in Beer's shop in 1904. Quance remained in business on Main Street until about 1940 when he moved his shop to his house on William Street. The harness making shops used hides purchased from McCallum's Tannery for 25¢ a pound until it closed in 1911. After that the hides had to be imported by the harness men. Large western steer hides, up to 8½ feet long, were considered to be the best material and it took 60 pounds of this type of leather to make one set of team harness. It took one man a week to make a set of harness. Beer had six men in his shop so his production was six sets per week. At the turn of the century a set of team harness sold for twenty-eight to thirty dollars. As motor transport gradually replaced the horse the harness makers began to disappear or to go into other fields. W. J. Beer added tire repairs, batteries and appliances to his business. Today the harness maker's trade is an almost extinct craft. Maurice Quance still makes halters and bridles and other small harness items in his basement and is the only harness maker left in the area and as J. M. Southcott once remarked 'perhaps the only true craftsman left in Exeter'.

While the harness maker represents fine craftsmanship it is the

blacksmith that we become most nostalgic about when recalling the days of horses. The blacksmith represents strength and skill. His shop was the centre of much village activity. As we mentioned previously many blacksmith shops were small factories. In the early 1860's the following blacksmiths were active in Exeter: John Baker, Richard Brown, R. Davis, Thomas Elston, William Huskin, John Tancock, Digory Braund and John Trick. Several of these men, such as Elston and Trick were also wagon makers. Exeter lost its last blacksmith in the mid 1950's when Tom Jolly closed his shop after carrying on a "dwindling business" for some years. Jolly's shop was on the corner of Huron and Main where the Devon building now stands. A blacksmith's shop had stood on that corner for nearly one hundred years.

Perhaps the most well known blacksmith in Exeter was James Stafford Dignan. Dignan was born in Durham County in 1845. In 1848 the family moved to Hay Township settling three and three-quarter miles west of where Hensall would be. In 1858 when James was thirteen he was apprenticed to John Trick, "blacksmith and carriage maker" in Exeter. The shop was on Main Street, south of Gidley's furniture factory (later Ross and Taylor's). Dignan received thirty dollars for the first year, thirty-five dollars in the second year and forty dollars for the third year. Being an apprentice was difficult; the boys worked long, hard hours for very little pay and it was illegal for an apprentice to decide unilaterally to quit. This was brought home to a lad in Exeter in the 1870's when he was arrested in London by Constable Gill for having left Mr. Fanson's employ before his apprenticeship was up. Dignan, however, finished his apprenticeship with Trick and left Exeter. He had learned how to make shoes and nails and how to shoe horses and oxen. For oxen two small shoes had to be made for each foot. He worked "all over Southern Ontario" for the next fifteen years returning to Exeter in 1874. He bought out John Trick, his former employer and with his brother John, carried on a blacksmithing and woodworking business in Trick's old stand until about 1892 when he bought Richard Davis' shop where the Post Office now stands. In 1898 he bought out Sam Buckingham and moved to Sam's old shop where the Devon building now stands. Buckingham had been in business there since about 1870 in conjunction with Ed Treble's woodworking shop. Buckingham did blacksmithing and Treble made buggies, cutters, sleighs and other items. At this time, charges were ten cents to set a shoe and twenty five cents for a new shoe. In 1904 prices were increased to twelve and one-half cents to set a shoe and thirty cents for a new shoe.

Dignan continued to do blacksmithing there until 1933 when he finally retired after seventy-five years in the trade. He sold his shop to Hillary Horton. Dignan at that time was the oldest, active smith in Canada. He went to work every day at 7 a.m. and felt guilty if he was late. Indeed, one morning he worked too long in his garden, so he took a side street to his shop rather than let those on Main Street see him going to work at the shockingly late hour of 9 a.m. Dignan died on March 12, 1939 at the age of ninety-four. He had worked hard all his life. He had three sons, two of whom became smiths. Hillary Horton, who took over Dignan's shop, was killed in 1933 shortly after he bought the shop. Horton was hit by a car while riding his bike on Main Street. Horton had previously operated a shop in part of the old Verity works.

Exeter's Last Blacksmith Shop

Richard Davis operated a shop where the post office now stands. There was another shop next door to Browning's drug store in the early years. W. H. Parsons, J. A. Russell, L. McTaggart in Francistown, and Digory Braund also in Francistown were other blacksmiths. Braund's shop burned in August 1901 but it was rebuilt; he was located where Snell's Shell station is now. Francis Blatchford (who died at the age of ninety-four in 1947), Abe Pym, David Russell and Wesley Simmons were other Exeter blacksmiths. David Russell purchased the shop on the south-east corner of Sanders and Main Streets from A. E. Pym in 1909 when Pym migrated west. Russell was evidently one of the town's practical jokers and it was related how he put "Kihoot" on a hog of Bawden's one day. The hog went crazy, knocked Russell over and ran over to Dr. Tennant's. It ran all over that part of Main Street before calming down. He apparently put kihoot on a goat that was in a 24th of May parade. The goat went wild and frightened Mr. Kirk's donkey at the Metropolitan Hotel. Kirk's donkey was pulling a fish cart at the time. The donkey took off for the river scatter-ing fish from the Metropolitan to the bridge Russell sold out to W. Simmons in 1924 Simmons sold out in 1929 to the Erie Gas Company who put up a gas station on the corner The company tore the old blacksmith shop down It had been one of the early brick buildings on Main Street

There are no blacksmiths left in Exeter now Jolly was the last. The livery barns and the blacksmith shops were gradually replaced with garages and gas stations and the not unpleasant odors of the blacksmith shop and of horses have been replaced by the noxious fumes of gasoline, diesel fuel and exhaust

Just as mechanics and garage operators had their lineal ancestors in the smiths and liverymen so do the car dealers have their ancestors in the dealers in horses Exeter was an important centre in the horse trade Among the dealers were men such as Messrs Hawkshaw and Hodgson who bought Clydesdale stallions in the 1870's Messrs Hodgson and Oke owned one of the area's top stallions in 1878 known as 'Crown Prince" he weighed 1790 pounds An item in April 1878 noted that he had started on his rounds on April 11 and would visit Hensall Staffa Farquhar, Elimville McGillivary Crediton and Devon Oke and Tom Bissett paid W Hodgson $3,000 for a stallion called "Bank of England" in the 1870's Bissett also owned another locally famous stallion "Clear Grit"

Bawden and McDonnell's barns on John Street were an important centre of the horse trade These men were importers of Clydesdale, Percheron and Belgian stallions They bought and sold horses for decades as we mentioned in another section Stallions were expensive as this example notes — McDonnell and Bawden sold "Darry Down" a Clydesdale stallion to George Coward of Usborne for $2,000 in February 1900 The horse had been imported from Scotland

T E (Tom) Handford was another important dealer An item in the Advocate of June 2 1904 mentioned that Handford paid out $18,000 to $20,000 every month for horses making Exeter "one of the best markets for horses in Ontario" In 1909 Handford shipped 41 carloads of horses out of Exeter to the West. There were 800 horses worth $190 each thus $162,000 worth of horse flesh Horse dealers also shipped to the U S and in 1893 the Advocate noted with satisfaction that the Americans had reduced the tariff on horses from $30 a head to 20% ad valorem This would improve the trade in "poor to medium animals"

The Boer War stimulated the horse trade and in 1900 Mr J D Graham paid out $50,000 in the Exeter area for horses He shipped many carloads from Exeter

Not all deals were big, however In 1884 James Creech found a horse wandering loose. He took it to the town keeper who then sold it to Creech for ten cents. Creech then sold it for one dollar. Another "big deal" was noted in the paper in 1877.

> "One of our town merchants who is known as an extreme lover of horse flesh traded to a group of gypsies a number of bones piled up in the shape of a horse, the vertebrae being exceedingly well defined and out of which animation had scarcely fled."
>
> He had given this horse plus $2.50 for another noble specimen. That evening the latter horse broke from its stall. The town keeper picked him up, 75¢ released him and $1.00 buried him in the morning. "The heaves are a bad thing to cure especially when applied by gypsies"

Also missing from the local scene now are the notices advertising the stallions' service routes. Such well-known studs as "Theobald", "Jeffro", "Rosedene Footprint" and "Joe de Cappelle" made their rounds. The last named stallion's route in the spring of 1920 was as follows: "On Monday morning he will leave his own stable and go to Percy Passmore's for noon, thence to Roy Coward's for night. Tuesday to John Duncan's for noon, thence to Hiram Hanna's for night." This pattern continued through Saturday. Joe was allowed to rest on Sunday. The terms were $15 to insure a foal.

A Horse Sale in Exeter — Tom Handford is on extreme right

The laws governing horses on the streets of the village were the forerunners of modern traffic laws. For example, the speed limit was 7 mph, bells were required on horses pulling sleighs or any vehicle on runners. Without bells, horse-drawn sleighs were so quiet

that there was danger of people being run over. Constables Gill and Creech were kept busy in the winter ordering men to get bells on their horses, stopping children from jumping on sleighs and slowing down fast driving. In the other seasons they were kept busy trying to prevent high speed driving. The Times in 1887 demanded that "the furious driving on Main Street" be stopped and that the constables prevent this driving at twice the legal limit of 7 mph. The constables also tried to prevent people from tying horses to the shade trees — and thereby killing them. The Constables' duty also included getting people to clean up stables. The Times complained about "unfragrant smells effusing from stables." Despite the laws and the constables there was little that could be done about runaways. Runaways, drunk driving and accidents were common on the village streets. The following items have been selected from the Advocate and Times as characteristic of incidents on Exeter's streets in the days of horses.

On June 16, 1887

> "The residents in the vicinity of the old race course were somewhat startled the other night to notice a man seated in a buggy driving his horse at a furious rate. ... he drove into a kettle of soap, collided with a gang plow, ran into a hay rake ... he was in a state of intoxication. The episode was a strange one to occur in such a civilized country as this."

In April, 1876

> The Rev. Robert Reynolds, Methodist Minister on the Kippen circuit drove over a rut "at a small pace" on the London Road. "One of the sulky springs was broken by the jolt, and Mr. Reynolds was suddenly thrown forward from his seat. His heels were resting on the crossbar between the shafts, and his toes under the iron braces at the corners. The suddenness and force of the jolt prevented him from extricating his feet, and he fell with his back across the axle, the back of his head striking the ground, and his arms becoming entangled in the ironwork under the sulky. In this position the unfortunate young man was dragged about three-quarters of a mile, the back of his head bumping against the gravel road."
>
> The horse was finally stopped but by then Reynolds was "in a lifeless condition, his head so mutilated and disfigured that he was almost beyond recognition."

In 1874

> "A team started to run when nearly opposite Mr. Treble's harness shop ... throwing Mr. Mitchell out upon the road, the hind wheel of the wagon passed over his head."

In 1874

> "A Mrs. Jameson of Blanshard was crossing the street when a passing horse rushed against her and knocked her down."

In December, 1877

> "A young colt owned by George Mace broke away and roared down

Main Street like a hurricane."

On August 23, 1877

"On Monday evening last, three of Exeter North's fair damsels were driving along Main Street nearly opposite the cricket ground. Their horse backed into the ditch, broke the wheels after which the wheels resembled the name of a Russian general that had become acquainted with a Turkish battery."

In 1877

"Galt Reporter" ran away while being aired by Will Hooper — "He went as the wind carrying his rider with him to Cottleville." (Hooper's mocking bird died that same week — poor week for Will.)

On December 11, 1884

"On Thursday afternoon last, after a farmer had unloaded his grain and driven a short distance, his horse took fright at the train and ran from Bobier's storehouse down the railway track, keeping nicely in front of the engine."

In 1884

A cow and a horse got tangled up together when the cow walked down the sidewalk and across which the horse and buggy were standing. A dog started the two animals down the street. The horse and the cow, with the cow in the lead, ran away down the street — the people were "so convulsed with laughter that they were powerless to stop the frantic animals." The buggy was wrecked. It was "a tandem rarely seen."

In May, 1892

A steer got away from John Shute and "for a time was master of Main Street."

In July, 1892

"John Snell was thrown out of his sulky and over the horse's head."

In 1899

"Dr. Browning had his arm broken in a runaway."

In 1898

While at the depot, George Cudmore's horse was frightened by the train and ran away, coming down town at a rapid rate. "Cudmore chased the horse, then jumped on the bus to obtain rapid transportation to catch the beast, but the bus driver suddenly whipped up his horses and just as suddenly Mr. Cudmore landed on the back of his head."

In 1895

A team belonging to William Ching of the Lake Road made a "lively runaway along Main Street." They collided with a tree, knocked down an old man, Nathan Carrick, broke the wagon, threw out a boy and some bags of chop and finally stopped near the Metropolitan Hotel.

In 1900

The son of Mr. Cantelon of the Metropolitan Hotel was run over by a

runaway horse

In 1904

Mr Dow's team was pulling a heavy sleigh and went into a fierce gallop They smashed William Dixon's rig and caused one of A Q Bobier's little boys to lose control of his horse and cutter

On June 23 1904

"The horse attached to Mr A Ford's delivery wagon ran away on Main Street yesterday morning and created somewhat of a sensation as it came down the street at breakneck speed colliding with rigs on the wayside amid shouts of whoa whoa

In July 1904

A dray team owned by Fred Gillespie made a dash for liberty

In 1914

John Essery's horse ran away on Main Street after being frightened by an automobile

On May 14 1931

"A three horse team driven by Mr Day of the Highway south of Exeter made a wild dash through the village about 7 45 Monday morning and in spite of the early hour attracted the attention of a number of citizens the horses became frightened at a ditching machine and started at a mad gallop with Mr Day hanging on to the reins. It was one of the most spectacular runaways that has been seen on the Main Street for many years with white horses on either side and a dark horse in the centre running at a furious rate

In 1899

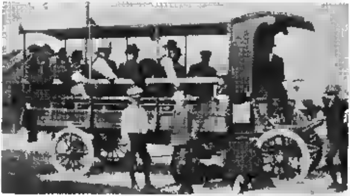
While two young men Czar Rollins and Harold Collins were driving Dr Rollins' horse to the office the animal which was high spirited and difficult to control ran away immediately upon leaving the stable The buggy collided with an old lamp post and lost a wheel The horse then galloped madly down the street until it reached the Central Hotel where a pile of travellers trunks threw the horse against a large post knocking the horse down and throwing the boys out of the buggy"

In 1914

"The milk wagon of Mr E Hewitt was struck by a train on Friday morning last and the horse and cart were thrown into a ditch"

The automobile made its first appearance in Exeter in July 1904 F E. Karn manager of the Sovereign Bank and W W Taman went to Toronto and bought a McLaughlin car made in Oshawa The car was a steamer with a speed of 10 to 12 mph The car met with an unfortunate accident on September 4 1904 when the Conner brothers had the machine out near Chiselhurst when by some means it caught fire" from the fire box and was burned up totally. Walter Conner was driving but he could find "no friendly pond of water near" to save the vehicle The reaction of Mr Karn or Mr Taman is not recorded The incident may have discouraged the villagers because it was two years before another motor vehicle was acquired by an Exeter resident. This delay occurred despite the notation of the Advocate in 1896 that "the horseless carriage is here to stay Its use may be general before twelve months have elapsed The comment appeared in connection with an item on a horseless carriage contest in Chicago where carriages propelled by electricity oil gas and air were exhibited In any case the next vehicle appeared in 1906 when A Q Bolner purchased a "bus" from Mr Kurtze of St Williams The vehicle was chain driven, weighed two tons and would carry 25 to 30 people or a good quantity of cream and butter Its speed was 15 mph Asa Penhale had the first ride in it but after a short distance the drive chain jumped its socket The vehicle gave so much trouble that people began suggesting that it couldn t run "except downhill"

In 1908 another "motor car" appeared in Exeter when the chauffeur for the late Ed Fowle owner of the car and a relative of W W Taman came to town A picture in the London Free Press of the 14th of July, 1934 shows Al Hearn Bob Wilcox H Beaver, J. Hearne, C Spackman Alfred Taylor J H Grieve and Hugh Spackman examining the car



A Q Boblu s Bus

The first Reo car in town was owned by S Martin and son and driven by Wilbur Martin It had a one cylinder motor under the seat it was cranked by hand, had no muffler and had oil lamps It would seat four By 1914 a number of people owned cars in Exeter including the following J A Stewart, W J Heaman M M. Doyle Dr. Quackenbush C Zuefle Charles Snell Dr Browning Wes Snell, W Martin H Ellworthy Dr Kinsman Dr Hyndman T Baker D Hartlieb Dr McGillicuddy, Dr Sweet A Collie, G

Windsor and the Connor Machine Company Billy Bean and J M Southcott owned a Buick on shares and John Parsons owned a car worth $5 000

"They had quite a time breaking in the auto" remarked J M Southcott "In the early years of the automobile it was a question of whether the horse or the driver of a horse was the most frightened at the approach of a motor driven car that chugged chugged over the road with a loud noise" Horse drawn vehicles had the right of way, if the driver of a horse drawn vehicle held up his hand the motor vehicle had to stop Nevertheless there were a good many accidents Wib Martin's Reo once scared a team drawing steel to the Crediton Bridge and the horses went into the river Wib lost the resulting court action On another occasion Wib's car frightened a horse pulling a buggy loaded with eggs the buggy the lady driving and the eggs were upset all over the road

C B Snell was driving C Zuefle's car down Main Street when the car failed to respond to Snell's cries of "whoa whoa" He finally got it stopped but he was only one of many who were slow in adapting to the change from horses to cars Another accident involving a horse and car occurred at Centralia in 1913 "Tom Carling Jr had a few moments of excitement at Centralia on Sunday afternoon when his horse became frightened at an automobile bolted into the ditch overturning the buggy and throwing him out Tommy was dragged two or three rods but was not hurt In turning into the road again the buggy righted itself and the horse stopped after a short run, no damage being done"

There were many accidents involving cars in the early years Often they were due to mechanical failures, poor driving, and bad roads A selection of early accidents illustrates the causes These selections are from the Advocate and the Times

In 1913

> "Sandy Bawden had four axles broken in his car He was taking a load of baseball fans to Clinton when the left back axle broke two miles north of town. The boys were taken to Clinton by Mr Petty of Hensall That same week another axle was broken while Mr Bawden was on his way to London"

In September 1912

> "Mr Thornton Baker of Exeter on Thursday evening of last week about 10 30 was nearing Hensall in his auto accompanied by T Hudson James O Neil F Huntley and F Smallacombe of that place when the car struck a stone crossing and jerking the steering gear suddenly caused Mr Baker to lose control of the machine Mr O Neil was pinned under the car and badly crushed The machine received slight damage"

In 1913

> "On Friday morning of last week as Messrs Frank Durdle and

> William Clayton of the Connor Machine Company were motoring near Winchelsea they met with a serious accident and how they escaped with their lives is a mystery they were travelling along the road when the front wheels of the automobile jumped into the rut and one of the hind wheels struck the grass and commenced to skid and made a complete somersault the top of the auto was smashed to pieces and the windshield and stearing gear broken "

A sad fatality occurred in the late summer of 1914 when Mrs Alex Dow was killed when the auto in which she was riding slewed and capsized into the ditch A Miss Burridge was driving the car at the time and all had gone well until within about a mile and a half from town when they turned out to pass a milk wagon The auto struck a rut which it followed for a couple of rods and after leaving the rut took to the ditch, capsizing and throwing the occupants out Mrs Dow was thrown against the windshield breaking the glass and landing into the ditch. She died almost instantly Miss Burridge and Earl Southcott were thrown clear of the car

People were frequently being run over by cars James Ballantne, Allan Fraser and Tom Yellow were all run over in 1921 Accidents involving automobiles steadily increased as the number of vehicles increased The newspapers carried lengthy reports of accidents but people continued to acquire motor vehicles in ever increasing numbers Laws were introduced and enforced in an effort to crack down on speeders. For example in 1926 the London Motor Club complained that the traffic laws in Exeter were being enforced far too rigidly The Motor Club reported however, that "rigid enforcement of the letter of the law happens only at times in Exeter so the motorist is advised to go through Exeter only on certain days If Exeter wants to turn all traffic in some other direction there is no better way of doing so

Also in 1926 the village put up the first stop signs in the town These were located at some of the intersections along Main Street Magistrate Hawkshaw cracked down on the speeders but one amusing incident may be recounted Mr Pilon was brought before Magistrate Hawkshaw for driving one of his cars sixty miles an hour at the south end of the village, the magistrate went to Mr Pilon two days later to buy the car

As motor vehicles began to increase in numbers in the village, service stations and garages began to outnumber the blacksmith shops In 1914 for example Wes Snell opened a Buick sales office on James Street and had the old Pickard building "fitted up to date" as a garage He installed a steel gas tank to service the growing numbers of automobiles Milo Snell sold Ford cars in 1915 His prices were as follows for a touring car $590 00, a runabout $540 00, a town car $840 00 He also sold Fordson tractors In 1921

S. J. V. Cann who operated a bus service to Grand Bend purchased the old Verity building and power house which he used as a gas station, cider mill and turning factory. Other early garages and service stations included T. H. Newell's Gray Dort dealership which he sold to Foote and Pilon. C. C. Pilon later operated the Huron Garage which was located where the Tuckey beverage warehouse is now. Pilon had a Chrysler and Plymouth dealership. John Taylor had a tire and battery business in the same location. S. M. Sanders and Alex Parsons had a McLaughlin car garage on James Street.

Mention has been made of the Guenther Tuckey Transport business which was formed in 1952 when Ben Tuckey amalgamated his firm which had started in 1929 with Earl Guenther's business which had developed from Henry Guenther's stage line. At the time of amalgamation, Guenther had 21 trucks and Tuckey 9.

Roads were steadily improved during the past fifty years. Number Four highway was paved for the first time in 1920. After the province assumed responsibility for major highways, further improvements occurred. Number Four highway, for example, was taken over by the province in 1927. The provincial highways are now among the finest in the world and are not closed for very long periods even during major blizzards. As recently as 1936 Number Four was closed for nearly a week during a bad winter storm. In 1971 the highway was partially closed for two or three days, but this is an abnormal condition.

The automobile is taken for granted now as a necessity for existence and it is difficult to conceive of the times when the car was a novelty. One last note of interest about automobiles: Dr. Fletcher purchased the last new car sold in Exeter in 1942 and he purchased the first new car sold in Exeter in 1946. There were, of course, no new cars produced during the war years.

While space does not permit us to trace the history of the Centralia RCAF station which made the aircraft a common sight in Exeter we will note that the first airplane to visit Exeter occurred on July 8, 1919. This caused "considerable commotion" as the whir of the motor attracted the attention of the villagers. "The aviators circled the town and did a number of stunts in the air. Finally they landed in a field adjoining the fair grounds. Captain Smith, a returned aviator was in charge of the machine and Mr. Norman Gillies accompanied him. The first to have the honor of ascending to the skies in town was Mr. J. S. Harvey. Miss Blanche Senior was the second."

A brief word about the provision of telephone service will conclude this chapter on communication. "Telephone service first became available in Exeter in 1888 after the erection of a long distance line by the Bell Telephone Company from London to Clin-

ton through Lucan and Exeter. A small switchboard was installed in Robert Hick's jewellery store on Main Street and the telephone directory for 1889 recorded eleven subscribers:

Acheson, Thomas, Central Hotel, Main Street
Bissett Bros., Hardware, Main Street
Christie, Ed., Livery, William Street
Gillespie, J. A., Drayman, Carling Street
Elliott and Elliott, Law Office, Main Street
Hawkshaw, F. W., Commercial Hotel, Main Street
Hicks, R., Jeweller, Main Street
Levett and Hutchins, Grain Merchants, Market Square
London, Huron and Bruce Railway Station
Pickard, Jas., General Merchant, Main Street
Verity, W. H. and Son, Foundrymen, Station Street

The Exeter Telephone Office 1935
George W. Lawson   Mary (McKaig) Salter   Olive (Lawson) Hicks

Dashwood was connected to Exeter by line in 1891. R. Hicks managed the Exeter Agency until 1905, when Arnold Marchand purchased Hick's jewellery store and took over the management of the Exeter Agency. There were between thirty and forty subscribers at the time. In 1908 Dr. Hyndman organized the Thames Road Telephone Company, in 1909 the Kirkton and Exeter Telephone Company was formed and in 1912 the Hay Township Municipal Telephone System came into existence. All three of these companies connected with the Exeter exchange. In 1912 Exeter's one hundredth telephone was installed.

In 1914 James Lawson bought the business from Marchand and also took over the telephone managership.

In 1926 the Bell Company opened an office one door south of the old office In 1928 George Lawson who had joined the telephone staff in 1925 assumed the managership Lawson retired in 1946 During his career he served as night operator as well as a day shift At that time Exeter had 436 telephones In 1951 there were 1080 and in 1970 2020 Dial phones were put into operation in Exeter in 1962

chapter 5

Amusements and Entertainments

> *The last half of the nineteenth century had few of the worries of the last fifty years They were really comfortable years in which to live no wars no automobile or airplane deaths no strikes no singing commercials no communists no give me give me few government returns few robberies but good music fine hospitality filled churches real amateur sport an honest day's work fewer needs a happy people*
>
> *(R. N Creech 1951)*

Undoubtedly Mr Creech was somewhat overly optimistic in his view of the last half of the 1800 s Life was not, for most people, as idyllic as he suggests Villages like Exeter had many problems but the townsfolk were generally happy They worked hard played sports equally as strenuously and developed their own amusements. Apart from visiting plays, shows and speakers the villagers depended upon their own devices for entertainment amusement and recreation This chapter will look at some of these amusements

Lovemaking the universal amusement' thrived in Exeter as

it did (and does and will) everywhere else. Instruction in the art received comment in the local paper. The Times carried advice on both kissing and love letter writing. Some advice on kissing from the Times of 1874 is given for those indulging in the practice in 1973.

The science of kissing

> "People will kiss — not one in a hundred knows how to extract bliss from lovely lips. ... Take the left hand of the lady in your right one, let your hat go to — any place out of the way, throw your left hand gently over the shoulder of the lady, and let it fall down the right side, towards the belt. Don't be in a hurry; draw her gently, lovingly to your heart. Her head will fall lightly upon your shoulder — and a handsome shoulder strap it makes. Don't be in a hurry; send a little life down your left arm. Her left arm is in your right; let there be an impression to that, not like the grip of a vice, but a gentle clasp, full of electricity, thought and respect. Don't be in a hurry. Her hand is carelessly on your shoulder. You are nearly heart to heart. Look down into her half-closed eyes. Gently, yet manfully press her to your bosom. Stand firm. Be brave and don't be in a hurry. Her lips are almost open. Lean forward with your head, not the body. Take good aim, the lips meet, the eyes close, the heart opens, the soul rides the storms, troubles, and trials of this life (don't be in a hurry). Heaven opens before you. ... No fuss, no noise, no fluttering and squirming like hook impaled worms. Kissing don't hurt, it don't require a brass band to make it legal."
>
> (The Times 1874)

Kissing

> "Of course you must be taller than the lady you kiss; take her right hand in yours, and draw her so gently towards you that you do not derange the economy of her tippet or ruffle — your left arm will find its place without instruction; at the same time the lady will throw her head back and you have nothing to do but lean a little forward, and the thing is done. Don't make a noise about it, as if you were firing percussion caps; don't pounce down upon it like a hungry hawk after an innocent dove — but silently revel in the sweet blissfulness of your opportunity, without ever once smacking your lips as you would over a bowl of turtle soup, or a glorious appearance of well roasted duck."
>
> (The Times May 10, 1877)

Aside from the universal amusement and recreation the good villagers of Exeter found various other forms of diversion. Drinking, as we have seen, was a favorite diversion from the earliest days. Ancillary to drinking was, naturally, fighting. A good fight diverted the onlookers and the participants as well. We noted in a previous chapter, for example, how a "gentleman" named MacDonald suffered the loss of his nose when it was bitten off in a "drunken spree" by Bruce Brownlee. Fights between villagers and farmers were not uncommon in the 1870's. The Times noted that:

> "a lively fracas occurred in front of the post office. ... The countrymen

retreated in tolerable good order. No serious damage was done."

Fights between the Exeterites and the folk from Francistown were likewise not infrequent and events like this provided diversions until the recent past.

Visiting gypsies provided various forms of amusement for the villagers. Fights, fortune telling, horsetrading and other recreation was provided by the gypsies who camped in the groves and woods around Exeter and in "Pickard's Grove" at the river. As late as 1928 gypsies stirred up a minor disturbance. An Usborne farmer claimed a gypsy woman had stolen some of his money while she was telling his fortune. Autos were dispatched in hot pursuit of the thieves. They were finally apprehended in Zurich by Constables W. J. Bissett and Ed Willis.

Work provided amusement as well for the early settlers. An item noted by W. H. Johnston in an article published in the London Free Press in 1935 had to do with the fast cradling that Dick Holman and Dick Handford were famous for in the area.

> One day Dick Holman's brother told an old man about Dick's abili to do fast cradling. The old man bet the brother that Dick could not cradle an acre of oats in one hour. The bet was accepted and rules made to govern the contest.
>
> It was a great event and a large crowd came to see it. The old man came on crutches more than a mile and they appointed him as timekeeper.
>
> The two Dicks used the same size of cradles and Dick Handford was given the privilege of whetting the scythes so that Dick Holman would not have to stop. Dick Handford went to the opposite end of the field and had his scythe sharp when Dick Holman came along. This method was continued throughout the contest.
>
> Round and round the acre swung the cradler, faster and faster slipped away the time and many were the predictions. "He'll never make it." Others said "Just wait. He'll do it."
>
> He knew what he was doing and kept right on swinging his cradle with ease and precision of clockwork while laying the grain behind him in beautifully arranged swaths or ledges as they were often called.
>
> With tireless energy he kept on until when the last cradleful slipped off the fingers the old timekeeper called 57 minutes and 30 seconds.
>
> The old man cheerfully paid the bet but declared those were machines not human flesh."

In these early years every task took on some elements of amusement. Barn raisings are other illustrations of this.

In any case, as time went on more sophisticated amusements were developed. A popular entertainment was the weekly paper which not only kept folk informed of the news and social events but also provided another popular feature, the weekly serialized story. These heart-rending romances were the 'soap operas' of the nineteenth century Some women undoubtedly would have trouble containing themselves as they waited for Thursdays to come so that they could follow the adventures of "Rosalie Rathorne" once again This particular story was a "romance of the heart" which said the Times, "will bye and bye be termed sensational" It was the story of "a charming young girl of middle height the graceful undulations of whose form assure us of its perfect symmetry" Rosalie after her many clandestine meetings with Arthur Gresham finally demanded "Oh! Oh! I must be proclaimed a wife ere I become a mother!" Such poignant tales as this and others such as "An Egyptian Romance" or "Nina the Nihilist" were printed in Toronto and sent each week to the Times and various other weekly papers

Every activity was the basis of socializing and entertainment We noted that the early settlers made their chores somewhat lighter by turning them into social events Even in the 1870's the Times was still commenting on such pioneer activities as berrying parties The editor pointed out that "ripe cherries new potatoes green apples, and doctor's bills are on the program for the next few days" Even a leap year provided an opportunity for amusement as it induced the formation of a "Bachelors Protective Association" The executive in 1888 included L Bissett H L Billings R Farmer and the peripatetic Nicholas Dyer Hurdon Said the Times "The girls should boycott any young man whom they have reason to believe has joined this infamous league"

Dancing provided a means to while away the winter evenings. There had been dancing from the days of the earliest settlers and notes about dances were common in the pages of the newspapers For example, in 1874 the Times noted that

> "the near approach of the season of long evenings and social gatherings is foreshadowed by the falling leaves rustling in shaded streets (and by) the movements of the devotees of Terpsichore

Dances were held in barns lodge halls, halls above stores, the Opera House homes and so on As time went on dancing academies were established including one set up in 1903 by J W Watson in Fanson's Hall Watson gave instruction in "all the latest dances including the three steps and Floradora" His academy was conducted in an "orderly and respectable manner" Many Exeterites will still remember the dances in the Dome Rink at Spruce Grove the new arena, Grand Bend the Opera House and many other places Such renowned bands as "Archie Cunningham and his Royal Marines", "Alan Brown's Orchestra", "Kekoa's 7 piece Hawaiian Orchestra", "McKinney's Chocolate Dandies" and others provided the music in the 1920's and 1930's

Church picnics lodge picnics family picnics have always been standard recreational activities Camping and cottaging at Grand

Bend became popular in the late 1880's and has remained a favourite haunt for the local people Soap bubble parties amused the young ladies and gentlemen of Exeter in the 1880's There would be contests with prizes to see who could make the largest bubble or accomplish other similar magnificent achievements Such parties as these and taffy pulls were simply devices and excuses for people to get together for amusement in the days preceding radio television films and other forms of entertainment.

Birthdays Easter Christmas and the other festivals were further opportunities for amusements Some "Jottings by J M S" about Christmas are given below

> "Those were the days when the only means of travel was by train and the London, Huron and Bruce, the butter and egg special did a thriving business There were four trains a day then one going north and the other going south in the morning and the same at night The depot was the place to meet your friends, particularly Christmas eve or Christmas morning
>
> On Christmas morning the favourite pastime was meeting old friends at the post office The post office was situated in the south part of what is now Lindenfield's store Mail was sorted Christmas morning and there was the usual anticipation of what the mail would bring The young people home for Christmas found it a convenient meeting place In one corner of the waiting room was a candy counter operated by the Gould sisters
>
> Then as now there was the usual speculation as to whether there would be snow and particularly ice for skating on Christmas and New Years as this was the favourite pastime in those days A band was usually present for skating the old year out and the new year in
>
> Across the road from the post office Mr and Mrs E A Follick ran a bake shop and restaurant in what is now the pool room and social centre If there were ever ardent temperance advocates with Christian principles Mr and Mrs Follick were that couple
>
> We had lived beside the Follicks for years and to the Southcotts it was a second home and the memories we treasure most today are the Christmas morning snacks we used to get at the bakery while they were in business and the Christmas breakfasts enjoyed in their home up until a few years ago with the passing of Mrs Follick
>
> A wood-burning stove provided heat for the bake shop and on Christmas morning Mr Follick would have a glowing fire of coals in front of which he made the golden brown toast upon which he lavished the butter and with jam and coffee we had a wonderful time
>
> When the Follicks retired from business the Christmas morning breakfast was continued in the home and as our family grew they were all included After breakfast there was usually a workshop period followed by a sing song It started the day off on a very happy note But times have changed and only memory lingers

A choice tid bit known as Devonshire cream or more commonly called scald cream was another Christmas treat

> "During the early history of the community Devonshire cream was often used in place of butter particularly before the butter churn became an established utensil in the home A goodly number of town people kept cows which ran at large on the village streets
>
> For making Devonshire cream fresh milk was put into shallow pans and allowed to stand until the cream had risen to the top Then the pan of milk and cream was placed into another pan with water and placed on the stove and very slowly brought to the scalding point After cooling the scalded cream was then taken off in layers and usually placed in a fancy bowl, ready for the table The scalded milk was very palatable and would keep sweet longer than the fresh milk "

Christmas parties and concerts in the churches and schools added to the season and as always visiting, eating and drinking rounded off the season

Organized amusements and recreation rested generally with the churches, lodges and clubs Exeter has had quite a number of lodges and clubs. Some of these include the Exeter Sons of England Benevolent society, The Orange Lodge Masons Oddfellows Royal Templars of Temperance, Sons of Temperance The Grange, Independent Order of Foresters Knights of Pythias, Ku Klux Klan Lions Kinsmen Beta Sigma Phi, the Legion, Scouts, Guides and so on The Temperance Lodges were discussed previously Little is known about the Sons of England except that it was Plymouth Lodge Number 63 N Dyer-Hurdon, Hugh Spackman, H L Billings, W Andrews were the chief officers

The Ku Klux Klan had a brief flurry in Exeter in 1926 The Klan of Kanada was organized in Western Ontario in 1925 On Sunday evening May 23 1926 forty candidates from Exeter and area were initiated into the order in a ceremony held in the fairgrounds 'Several thousand spectators' were present "Klansmen from Western Ontario gathered in large numbers" At the ceremony, Knights paraded in their white robes, several were on horseback Two clergymen delivered addresses outlining the claim that the order was a "Christian organization that stood for the supremacy of the Christian religion the protection of womanhood, one language free speech and a free press

By the eery light of a flaming cross the initiatory ceremony was performed by the Knight Kleagle" The initiates assembled in the centre of a square made by Klansmen and there they took the solemn oath', Led by the band the assembled throng sang several hymns after which lunch was served at the crystal palace It is un clear exactly who the local bigots were who felt it was necessary to inaugurate this infamous order in Exeter Perhaps it is just as well that their names were not recorded

The Independent Order of Oddfellows Lodge 67 was established in Exeter in 1871 The charter members of the lodge were James

Gifles Dr Young Cowan Alex Lewis Abraham Sanders William Rollins and David Johns Added immediately to the rolls were Robert Pickard William Earl and Charles Wilkie By the end of 1871 Henry Lambrook (cabinet maker) John Greenway (butcher), Isaac Carling (merchant) James Kydd (carriage maker) John McLaughlin (moulder) John A Hayes (grocer), John Vanstone (watch maker) John Broderick (merchant) John Ross (carpenter) William Bawden (farmer) A G Dyer (carpenter) Robert Bissett (tinsmith) and T A McConnell (flour and feed), had become lodge members

Within six years four of the six charter members had been suspended In addition two of those listed above had withdrawn by the end of 1877 By 1891 the lodge was on the verge of collapse because of the reduced membership and lack of interest After the turn of the century however the lodge began to grow and by 1946 there were 203 members The present membership is about 240

The lodge meetings were held in several places in the early years, Mace's Hall, Samwell's Hall, D Johns Hall Senior's Hall were used as meeting places In 1887 the present building which contains the lodge rooms was erected and the meetings moved to this building shortly after it had been built

The Masonic order came into existence in Exeter in 1860 The first meeting of Lebanon Forest Lodge No 133 was held in the Francistown Hotel on May 28 1860 According to R N Creech's historical sketch of the Lodge from which most of this information comes the meeting was held in Madill's Tavern Perhaps Madill was the proprietor of this hotel at the time The charter was received on September 26 1860 The charter members were William Diamond John Dempsey Hugh Dunseith Robert Brabson Patrick Jamieson John Collingwood George McLeod and William Verity Worshipful Brother William Diamond was the first Master Brother John Dempsey Senior Warden Brother Hugh Dunseith Junior Warden Brother George McLeod Secretary Brother Patrick Jamieson Treasurer Brother William H Verity Senior Deacon Brother Robert Brabson Junior Deacon, and Brother John Collingwood Tyler The lodge members met "on the first Monday on or before the full moon"

The meeting place changed from time to time By September 1860 the lodge met in Robert Bissett's tavern which is described as being on Main Street about 50 yards south of the bridge and on the west side This information is puzzling since the only tavern in this area was McConnell's and it was supposedly on the east side Perhaps Bissett's tavern was the old McConnell Inn and the location was indeed on the west side The lodge did not meet long in Bissett's Inn From February 25 1861 to June 1864 the brethren met in William Balkwill's Tavern which was located approximately across from where G. Arthur's service station is now. In June 1864 the lodge moved back to Bissett's tavern and remained there until 1872. There was much moving during the next few years with the lodge meeting in a variety of places including Mace's Hall (where the IGA is now), Samwell's Hall, Dave Johns's Hall, the rooms above the Sovereign Bank, Senior's Hall and eventually in the McDonnell, Dickson, Carling Hall.

The Orange Lodge began in Exeter in the early years of the village. It existed in the 1860's and by the 1870's was thriving. Exeter was the scene of many July 12 extravaganzas. For example, on July 12, 1874 there were 7000 people gathered in Exeter for the celebration. Said the Times:

> "The village was most beautifully decorated by the Orangemen at Exeter who had erected four grand arches, one in front of George Willis, Esq., Reeve, ... one in front of Mr. Carling's store, ... one on Mill Street near Main on the line of march to the grove."

Each of these arches was covered with evergreens, British ensigns and Union Jacks. "The glorious old flag that's braved for a thousand years the battle and the breeze." There were flags and bunting flying from the houses and stores. The parade was led by the Zurich brass band followed by 1500 Orangemen in procession. The mile-long parade marched from Reeve Willis' up Main Street to Gidley, thence west to William, and south to North Street, east to Main Street and thence to the rear of Samwell and Pickard's store. According to the Times, the temperature reached 100 degrees that day. The Exeter Lodge had been responsible for the arrangements and in 1874 the executive that year included the following officers:

Worshipful Master	Brother C. Willis
Deputy Master	Brother J. Spackman
Treasurer	Brother Lambrook
Secretary	Brother J. White
Committeemen	Brother W. Hawkshaw
	Brother T. Staddon
	Brother J. Pratt
	Brother L. Hardy
	Brother J. Balkwill

By 1886 there were thirty lodges in Huron County. The South Huron Lodge met in Exeter and at the April 1886 meeting the following motion was passed:

> "A resolution was unanimously adopted commending the Government in the noble stand taken by them in carrying out the death sentence on Louis Riel."

The same meeting also "granted the sum of $20.00 to assist

the Rev. Brother Chiniquy in carrying out his noble work." Chiniquy, the renegade Catholic priest who eventually joined the Presbyterian Church, had lectured in Exeter a few years previously in 1878 in the local Presbyterian Church.

On July 12, 1889 it was reported that 15,000 people were in Exeter for the annual observation of the great battle. Another great parade was held in Exeter in 1893. The following items are taken from the Times' report of the event:

> "The celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of Boyne was right royally celebrated in Exeter with characteristic zeal and interest. Early in the morning the lodges of the more immediate neighbourhood together with their farmer friends, who being possessed of a true feeling of patriotism left their haying which had well begun — began to arrive in town in large numbers.
>
> At 1.30 o'clock the procession was formed at the Metropolitan Hotel and was fully one and a half miles long. ... the procession as it wound its way along Huron Street to Snell's grove was a bright broad ribbon of rainbow hues.
>
> Many of the old time characteristics of an orange parade have been replaced by the introduction of new and more elegant procedure and improved conduct."

The speeches were suitably bigotted for the occasion and cries of "No Popery" filled the air. References to the historic battles of Londonderry, Enniskillen and the Boyne brought cheers and it was proclaimed that Orangemen would again die "for the Truth." One reverend gentleman brought cheers and shouts when he proudly avowed that he would never shake hands with any treasonist papist.

L. H. Dickson was Worshipful Master of the Exeter lodge No. 924 at this time. In 1894 the South Huron Lodge heard "several eloquent speeches" and passed a resolution congratulating Sir Mackenzie Bowell "upon his elevation to the Premiership of this grand Dominion." In 1895 the following "amusing incident" was reported. The Orangemen had gone to the Presbyterian Church for a service conducted by the Rev. Mr. Acheson. He opened his sermon at eleven o'clock and "after somewhat exhausting his store for the occasion he thought it time to close, but lo! according to the clock he had just preached half an hour." Rev. Acheson of course had to continue preaching which he did until the clock said 12 o'clock. It was however 1 o'clock and he had preached for two hours. The clock was out of order. The people "wondered what they had done to be subjected to a two hour sermon."

The century was closed with another grand celebration on July 12, 1899. As usual the streets of the village were "gorgeously decorated." As usual the "brethren" assembled on the recreation grounds. The parade was headed by County Master Scarlett mounted on the traditional white horse. Suitable references to "Romanism" drew cheers. Mr. D. M. Jermyn of Wiarton the Grand Master of Orangeism in Ontario indicated that Orangemen should work at "enlightening Catholics". Jermyn also stoutly defended the liquor dealers who had come under attack from a previous speaker. Cheers followed Jermyn's invocation that "all Protestants join hands in keeping down the Catholics or they will rise in their ascendancy again and tyranny will . . . prevail". "The weather was perfect and the dust on the streets well laid" and 5000 Orangemen and their supporters were suitably harangued.

Main Street Exeter July 12 about 1930

Orangemen continued to hold their celebrations in Exeter from time to time. The Lodge continued to exist in Exeter until recent years. The Lodge is defunct in Exeter now and across Ontario it has been reduced in power and influence. It is probably safe to suggest that the Lodge in Ontario is a relic of another age and will not emerge as a potent force again.

Visiting forms of entertainment brought the outside world to the village. On Tuesday August 28, 1877 the villagers and area farmers looked forward to thrills and excitement from Coleman and Hamilton's great London Sensation and Field Museum. The people were not disappointed when the show set up on the cricket grounds featuring the following

Melodramatic Miracles
Theatrical Transformations
Ethereal Groupings
Aerial Evolution
Unearthly effects

Illustrious Living Prodigies
Unsolved enigmas and supernatural puzzles of Europe
Balloon Ascension at 1 o clock

The show was advertised by a band drawn by eight horses which paraded through the streets At 1 o clock Mr Gaston 'went high into the heavens", his balloon came down about a mile east of town The show featured five "tableux" which were ghost scenes in which 'figures floated through the air or remained suspended" Mr Whiston "humorist" and Madame Etta "contortionist" also entertained the local folk

Visiting shows and circuses came to Exeter every year Such outfits as Howe's Circus and Wild West Show in which two cow boys were shot "very cleverly" entertained the townsfolk Another feature of the Howe Show saw cowboys shoot peanuts off each others heads at ten yards

Another show was Lemen Brothers World Monster Show This show listed the following exhibits

Three Ring Circus
Five Continent Menagerie
Roman Hippodrome
The Mighty Bovalapus, "mighty monster of the deep"
Rajah, the largest elephant in captivity
Captain Santiago, high diver
Little Edna rider
Racing steers
Kittie Kruger rider
the only Ou Rang ou Tang in Canada
Grand street parade at 10 o clock

The 8000 people who came were disappointed "The menagerie was poor", "the tents leaked", and none of the advertised performers appeared

Other touring entertainers, lecturers, plays and shows provided Exeter's citizens with "professional" or "semi-professional" entertainment Some of it was not very good some of it was apparently very acceptable The following items simply provide some illustrations of the kinds of visiting entertainers who came to the village in the late 1800's and first part of this century These touring shows would use various halls such as Fanson's Hall, churches the Opera House and later Leavitt's Theatre

Lecturers came to speak on all manner of topics Chiniquy spoke in Exeter in 1878 as did the "ex monk from Bulgaria", F G Widows According to the Times Widows' "main objective was to get money" Miss Evans "The Cambrian oratress" lectured on temperance as did many others Commander Cheyne R N came to Exeter in 1886 sponsored by the Mechanics Institute Cheyne spoke in Drews' Hall (The Opera House) and his subject was "Egypt and the late war". His enlightening address was "illustrated with 65 magnificent lime light views". Admission was 25¢ for adults and 10¢ for children. J. W. Bengough also spoke in Exeter in 1886. Bengough was considered to be "Canada's greatest caricaturist".

Theatrical companies were frequent visitors to the village. The usual place for the performances was the Opera House. This building stood across from the Town Hall immediately north of the present Fred Darling store. Darling tore the building down a few years ago. The Opera House building was probably built in the 1870's by the Gidleys. It was acquired by Drew in the mid 1880's and he undertook a major renovation in 1886. The seating capacity was variously stated with figures ranging from 700 to 1200. The Opera House building had various owners down through the years and the downstairs section housed various businesses.

Travelling theatrical companies presented plays there. In 1886 for example the Times drama critic reported on a play entitled "Only a Drunkard's Wife".

> Frequently the Exeter theatre-going people are deceived by amateur companies, but never we believe have they been made the victims of so detestable a fraud as by the troupe styled "The Hayes Peoples Theatre Company" in a drama entitled "Only a Drunkard's Wife". Shortly after opening the performance being of such a disgusting and clumsy character the more elite of the audience returned to their homes.

Evidently some spectators remained and "kept up a tumult of derision". The Times' report said the group consisted of a lot of lazy people from London doing the towns to gain subsistence for the winter.

In January 1887 Domer's Lyceum Dramatic Company did three plays "Three Stars", "Divorce" and "Our Boys". In July 1886 the St. Marys Opera Company presented the opera "Patience" in the roller rink. Said the Times:

> "As a rule we don't expect much from amateur clubs and the St. Marys club certainly filled the expectation."

The Times kindly requested that the company "not perform again in Exeter".

In June 1887 the Baird Company presented a number of plays to Exeter audiences. The offerings included:

New Kathleen
Cast Adrift or Father's Curse ("performed in supereminent style")
Uncle Josh the New England Farmer
Nip and Tuck
The Gilded Cage (by Mark Twain)
Betsy Baker and Ben Bolt

The advertisements said a "handsome china set" was to be given to the lucky ticket holder. "There will be no deceit practiced; the china will be left in Town." Admission was 20¢ and 10¢.

Other touring players to the Opera House in the 1880's included such celebrated troupes as The Royal Star Dramatic Company. This group it was said "will give the people of Exeter an idea of the perfection to which drama can be brought". F. R. Wren's Uncle Tom's Cabin Company arrived on December 24, 1884 in its own rail car which carried the company of 20 including 8 Jubilee Singers from the "University for the Coloured Race at Memphis". Varey's Grand Moving Panorama showed "War Scenes" and "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" in May, 1884.

Other popular groups in Exeter were "The Alleghanian Bell Ringers", the "Kickapoo Indian Company", the "Diamond Medicine Company", "Swiss Bell Ringers", the "McGibney Family" and many others. Throughout the 1890's the Opera House saw Uncle Tom's Cabin played many times. Also appearing in 1890 was the Hyers Company, a troupe of "coloured folk" whose "singing and dancing is of an infectious character". In 1892 "Harry Hart's Pleasure Party" presented a "snide show" that was "not quite proper". The details of this presentation by 4 men and one woman are obscure unfortunately. Guy Brothers Minstrels, the Rankin Scottish Concert Company and Burtches Monster Theatre Company appeared in 1893. The latter group did Uncle Tom's Cabin on August 8, 1893 with "elegant scenery, novel mechanical effects, ferocious bloodhounds, the band, the Magnolia Quartette". The performance was evidently "tiresome to behold".

Florence Washington and W. E. Ramsay presented scenes from School for Scandal in 1893. In 1897 the Opera House saw the most "marvellous invention of the nineteenth century", namely "Cinematographe". For two and one half hours Exeterites saw scenes from London, England, the Coronation of the Czar of Russia, Boxing, ocean liners, soldiers, cavalry charges and other exciting pictures.

Local talent could also be seen in the Opera House. In January, 1900 N. Dyer Hurdon and Louis Day organized a "Patriotic Concert" in aid of the Red Cross' work in South Africa. "A crowded house and the receipts should evidence our loyalty to the Empire on this occasion." The sum of $168.30 was raised by the show which included the Exeter band, singing by Myra Pickard and Messrs. Johns, Hicks, Davidson, and Ball as well as by the popular Mac Vincent. The latter gentleman sang "I want to be a soldier" and brought the house down. Judd Davidson presented a violin solo. Nicholas Dyer Hurdon did Kipling's "Absent Minded Beggar" set to music of his own composition. Principal Boyd "drilled" the boys from the school to conclude the show

Again in 1903 Exeter's theatre-going folk had the opportunity to see Uncle Tom's Cabin This time John F Stowe's company came to town in its own special train The company set up a "monster tent" which could seat 2500 This performance featured a "Grand Allegorical Transformation Scene, an Optograph, Professor Bullinger's Orchestra and a Pack of Siberian Bloodhounds".

In 1906 the Big Bijou Company spent a week in the Opera House, presenting "The Banker's Daughter", vaudeville acts such as songs and dances by Billy Conlin impersonations by W C Stuart, Ed Stauffer's serio-comic acts, Stuart and Burton's songs and dances contortionists acrobats and many others The door prize, one ton of coal, was won by Frank Taylor

In July, 1904 Madame Livinski a Psychic Palmist spent a week at the Commercial Hotel giving her readings for 50¢ and 35¢

The Prisoner of Zenda was "given in metropolitan completeness" in 1900 About the same time a cast of Exeter actors including Mae Vincent T B Hooper, Miss Leavitt N Cass and R N Creech presented the play Finnigan's Fortune

The Opera House continued to be used for plays lectures amateur contests, Chautauqua, dances and other events during the decades following the First Great War In 1922 Dr McTavish presented a series of lectures on "A Woman For Sale" and "Dirt, Debt, Doubt and the Devil". Chautauqua was very popular in the 1920's The details of a July 1920 Chautauqua are shown below

CHAUTAUQUA WEEK
Four glorious days in Exeter

Monday July 12th

Carveth Wells Explorer
Lecture with pictures

The Shakespeare Quartette
Classical and popular songs

Tuesday July 13th

Miss Constance Rawlson
"Canada's Womanhood"

The Jordan Entertainers
Program of attractive features

Famahasika's Pets
A spectacular entertainment

Wednesday July 14th

Wagnerian Quartet

Soprano, violin, viola, cello, piano

William H. Stout, lecturer
instructive, popular

Thursday, July 15th

Old Song Singers
Costumed songs of olden times

Dr. Robert Norwood of Philadelphia,
well-known Canadian lecturer

On November 14, 1917 the Opera House was the site of the presentation of "The Birth of a Nation". This was billed as "The Most Tremendous Dramatic Spectacle that the brain of man has yet produced." There were 5,000 scenes, 18,000 characters, 3,000 horses. The biggest battles of the Civil War were re-enacted. "Wonderful artillery duels in which real shells, costing $80.00 apiece were used."

Local drama groups used the Opera House over the years. Such groups as the Exeter Amateur Dramatic Club, the Trivitt Memorial Players, The James Street Church Young Peoples League, the Exeter Choral Society presented works. The Goderich Comic Opera Company presented "The Lass of Limerick Town" in 1918; the production was sponsored by the Exeter Patriotic League. Also in 1918 the Exeter Dramatic Club presented the play "The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary". Some of the players included Mrs. N. J. Dore, R. W. Fuke, W. S. Manson, N. J. Senior, Miss L. J. Boyle. "everyone took their parts well," said the Advocate. After the Opera House ceased to function local groups used the stage of the school. For example, in the 1950's the Exeter Players Guild tried to revive the tradition of local drama.

So the old Opera House was the main centre of entertainment in Exeter until the appearance of films and the opening of a motion picture theatre. The first reference to the showing of film in Exeter was in 1901 when the Cox Brothers presented "a film" of the funeral procession of Queen Victoria, scenes from the South African War, The Galveston, Texas Disaster and other current events. However, the real beginning of film entertainment in Exeter came in 1912. W. Leavitt, as we noted previously, had erected the Dome Rink and it was here that the first films were shown in Exeter on a regular basis. Leavitt had come to Exeter from Granton where he was born in 1852. He was one of the area's notable businessmen, operating a variety store known as Leavitt's Fair, the Dome Rink and the Grand Bend Park which he had acquired from John Spackman in 1898. In 1914 he converted the former Gould residence on Main Street into the Dome Moving Picture Theatre (located where Rowe's Electric Store is now). In the same year, Enson Bice of Clandeboye had petitioned Council to grant him a licence to open a "movie picture show." Apparently nothing ever came of Bice's plans but Leavitt's theatre prospered. Among the first films shown in 1914 were the six reels shown on Saturday, August 30. These were: Dash for Liberty, Hannigan's Harem, World Above, Unwritten Chapter, Mary's New Hat, and Janitor's Quiet Life. Admission was 10¢. Other early films included Brewster's Millions, the Call of the North (in five parts with 317 scenes), Enoch Arden and Ten Nights in a Bar Room (A Moral Lesson Never to be Forgotten). The great film stars of the silent movies flickered across the screen of the Dome to the piano music played by Mr. Leavitt's daughter. Douglas Fairbanks Sr., Ken Maynard, Jackie Coogan, Rudolph Valentino, Lon Chaney, Hoot Gibson and Harold Lloyd, Tom Mix in the Great K and A Train Robbery, W. C. Fields, Will Rodgers, Elmo Lincoln as Tarzan of the Apes entertained the people of Exeter as they did all over North America.

In 1931 "Leavitts New Talking Picture Theatre" was opened. This is now the McKerlie Automotive Building. The new theatre had 357 seats and was "up to date in every way." It was operated by Leavitt and his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Cochrane from 1931 to 1949. In 1949 Mrs. Cochrane sold the theatre to G. D. Thompson of St. Marys. Dwindling audiences forced the closing of the theatre in the late 1950's.

Despite outside entertainers and films Exeter people did provide much of their own entertainment. A most important group in any town was the local band. During the past one hundred years Exeter has had a band of some kind for most of those years. The traditional marching band has not operated in Exeter in recent years but from time to time the town has had good brass bands. It is difficult to say when a band was first formed in Exeter but it was in existence in the early 1870's. A report in the Times in 1874 reads:

> The members of the Exeter Band have a rare time peregrinating around from house to house feeding on the best Baltimore oysters. . . Only a few nights ago they enlivened Exeter North with the beautiful strains of music floating out on the calm evening wind . . . and got fed by the gratified listeners.

An item in 1873 referred to a "promenade concert given by the Exeter Brass Band in the drill shed on the evening of the first of July." In 1874 another item reported a "Concert of the Exeter Cornet and Orchestra Band in Drew's Hall." The Times report praised the performance of the band in the highest terms. It seems reasonable to conclude that a well organized band would take some time to develop, consequently, it may be suggested that the bands must have been formed at least a few years earlier.

It is worth noting just incidentally that in 1874 a Professor Palmer took up residence in Exeter with the intention of starting a boys' band. After the boys had purchased the instruments from the Professor and he had instructed them in the musical arts a "grand concert" would be staged. The "Music Man" stayed in Exeter for a time but evidently he did not make much progress in forming a boys' band.

During the summers, then, of the 1870's the band marched "up and down the principal streets" playing for the residents. Concerts were given in various places. In July, 1876 an item in the Times noted that the "Exeter Brass Band" had given another July 1st concert. "A few more of these promenade concerts would bring our band more fully into note", said the Times. The band would often accompany the firemen as they paraded about the town. The band would serenade citizens on special occasions as it did in April, 1888 when the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Acheson, newly married, was entertained. At that time the band may have been known as the Exeter Fusilier Band. During these early years from the late 1860's perhaps to the 1880's the Director was first Sam Gidley and later Edward Treble.

In 1890, the band underwent a reorganization. By this time Council had taken over the instruments and was providing some financial support for the band's operation. It was reported that the Executive included in 1890 W. E. Gundy, President, Luther Gill, Vice-President, Bert Fuke, Treasurer and Harry Gidley, Secretary. The reorganized group was called "The New Exeter Brass Band". Throughout the 1890's and early years of this century the Band presented concerts in the Town Hall, the Opera House, on the school grounds where a band stand had been erected, in Riverview Park and in Victoria Park. Some time during these years Harry Gidley assumed the leadership of the band. Harry was following in his uncle's footsteps. Samuel Gidley had led the band in its earliest years. Harry led the Exeter Brass Band for many years and also founded and led the Exeter Orchestra, "which played many engagements throughout Western Ontario". Harry was himself "an accomplished cornet soloist and the master of many brass instruments and drums". Harry Gidley also managed the Opera House during its later years as a center of theatrical and musical productions. Mr. and Mrs. Gidley lived in the old Gidley house on William Street. Harry Gidley died on March 26, 1944; he was the last of the Gidley family to live in Exeter.

During the 1890's and the decade before the First War the Band played frequently and evidently it played well. For example, in July, 1899 the Band presented "the most high-classed open air" concerts that the people of Exeter have ever listened to' The program included the following

March 'Canton Halifax'
Nordica Waltzes
Rocked In The Cradle Of The Deep (trombone solo by Mr Alfred Davidson)
Soldiers In The Park
The Plunkville Serenade
Comin' Thru' The Rye (clarinet solo by George Eacrett)

The concert included other items as well and was evidently well received.

Another presentation in the 1890's by the band is described below in an item from the Advocate

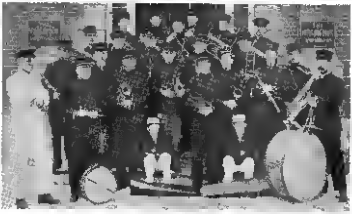
> "At 7 o'clock the north and south companies formed into procession at the Town Hall and headed by the band paraded Main Street The procession which was composed of about 68 firemen in uniform, each carrying a torch, presented a nice appearance, and more especially imposing from the fact that the stately form of our worthy townsman, Mr Richard Farmer occupied the important position of drum major and he makes a capital one. He was the subject of much eulogism by the lady portion of the congregation on the street About 8 o'clock the Opera House was comfortably filled and at 8 30 the curtain was drawn up and the program opened with an address by the chairman Dr Rollins Mr R H Collins who sang in an articulate tone of voice a solo of choice selection Miss Dodge of London following in a solo full of tender emotion The recitations by Wm Hughes and the comic songs by Mr Money were well received the duet by the Misses Dodge and Barnard of London"

Not everyone in town appreciated the efforts of the band in these years On occasions the concerts were sometimes disturbed by noisy audiences as on the 24th of May, 1890 when a concert featuring "whistling solos by Miss McMannis" was disrupted The house was described as disorderly "A pack of toughs could not be subdued as a result only a small part of the programme was heard" The citizens of Exeter did however respond favourably to the band most of the time The efforts of such musicians as F Farncombe, Percy Verity, Tom Oke, Frank Oke and Walter Bawden were appreciated not only at concerts and parades but also at "private garden parties"

Toward the end of 1902 however the band was having serious difficulties in maintaining its existence and by mid 1903 the band was defunct A grant of one hundred dollars from Council helped revive the band Council did, however, impose the requirement that the band play at least once a week on the streets of the village Again in 1911 the band was reorganized and flourished for another ten years playing many engagements including the London Fair

About 1920 the band collapsed again and was not revived until about 1933. Ted Walper was a principal force behind the revival; also involved in reviving the band was W. D. Sanders, J. Senior, H. O. Southcott, E. Harness, E. Davis, Ed Westcott and Clarke Fisher. This new band consisting of forty two musicians staged a concert in Leavitt's Theatre in April, 1934. As J. G. Stanbury noted, the audience was "thrilled" with the "excellence" of the band. The band operated well throughout the 1930's. Ted Walper led the band during most of this time and some of the members were:

Cornet – Stan Smith
Allan Penhale
Bill Stanlake
Lloyd Cook
Jack Brintnell
Jim Francis
Alvin Lindenfield



The Exeter Band, about 1913

Clarinet – Bill Geddes
Allan Fraser
Allan Westcott
"Boots" Klumpp
Bass Horn – Harold Whyte
Trombone – Pat Skinner
Ernie Davis
Ed Westcott
Piccolo – Harold Elliott

In 1937 the band sponsored the presentation of "Its a Knockout" starring Harold Skinner.

The Exeter Band parading return of the militia from camp. This picture would be from about 1905

In 1939 the band was again defunct. It was a great disappointment for Ted Walper and he along with Harold Whyte and Bill Webster made a valiant effort to keep the band going during the 1940's. In the late 1940's the band was fully revived with some help from Council. New uniforms were acquired and a citizens' band committee was formed. The revival was, however, short lived and the band declined a few years later. There have been sporadic attempts by men such as Bruce Cann to revive the band but for the past twenty years or so Exeter has not had a brass band, although there has been a pipe band maintained by the Legion during this time.

So for the best part of the past century, Exeter has had the traditional small town brass band. It provided good recreation for the members and equally good entertainment for the townspeople. The leaders have included Sam Gidley, Ed Treble, Harry Gidley, Ed Christie, George Eacrett, Sam Hanna, and Ted Walper. Jack Mallett must hold the distinction of having the longest tenure in the band playing for 65 years under all of the leaders. Mallett was clerk and bartender at the Central Hotel.

Other musical efforts in Exeter included the Huronia Male Choir which has existed on and off for the past forty years. In 1932, for example, it was led by W. R. Goulding. Charlie Godbolt was a member of the group and was often "the hit of the evening with his imitations of Harry Lauder." In the 1940's and 1950's Mrs. H. L. Sturgis directed the group. One of the most ambitious productions was the Pirates of Penzance. Fifteen hundred people saw such locals as Bill Cochrane, Allan Elston, Harold Skinner, and many others perform. The choir has experienced a revival in recent years under Mrs. R. McCaffrey.

Patriotic celebrations were important features of Exeter's life

33rd Huron Militia Battalion, the Exeter Company.

The band prepared for these special days with diligent practice. In the Times of June 28, 1877 it was noted that the band was practicing for the Dominion Day celebrations. Said the Times "They played remarkably well and while out they gave our genial station master a serenade. The fire engines were out the same evening and did themselves credit." In the same issue the editor berated the village merchants. He said "We hope the businessmen of the town will not be behind those of other places but will celebrate Canada's Natal Day in a truly loyal manner by closing their places of business, let there be no closed front door with back door business about it either. The clerks deserve all the time you can possibly give them.

Our farming friends are most to blame ... For goodness sakes leave your eggs and butter at home when you come in to the races."

July 1 and May 24 were the two major patriotic festivals of the year. On these days the glories of the empire and of the Canadian part of that empire were celebrated with fervor. Other patriotic days were also recognized such as coronations, jubilees, military victories and in the very early years of Exeter there is some evidence to indicate that Guy Fawkes Day (November 5) was observed. "Remember, remember, the 5th of November" was not, however, a rallying cry in the streets of Exeter for very long.

A few illustrations of these celebrations are given to indicate the activities. One notable 24th of May was in 1886 although it was not any more notable than many other years. The events of 1886 are characteristic of many May 24th celebrations. Two thousand visitors joined the nearly two thousand villagers to view a "Trades and Calithumpian Parade" headed by Reeve Dr. Rollins, and Councillors William Bissett, James Pickard, Johns and Hoskins, clerk M. Eacrett and Treasurer George Eacrett. Parade Marshal Castor Willis had placed these leaders of the village in an elegant covered carriage The band directed by Sam Gidley and led by George Bawden's dog proudly wearing a blanket bearing the name on either side provided stirring march music The parade included the following the two fire companies in full uniform, dry goods floats (Pickard and Carling) grocers floats (Farmer Bros James Ferguson) travelling stores (Dearing and Sanders) bakers (Bell and Rossenberger), butcher (R Davis), cooper shop (J Gould), harness boots, shoes (C Eacrett), carriage factory (J Mattice) self binder (R Lang) John Vail on roller skates represented the roller rink Bringing up the rear of the parade were two mules pulling the skating rink wagon a performing bear and a wagon load of small girls in white singing God Save The Queen

In the afternoon the crowds moved to the fairgrounds to watch the various activities The band played as the games went on Some of the games and contests are noted below

- a 300 yard hose reel race between the two companies was won by Reliance Co No 1 in 59 seconds
- the bicycle race was won by F Hess of Zurich with runners up being James Ramsay and William Gundy
- Captain McGuires' team won the tug-of war
- The 'greasy hog' was caught by Joseph Bawden
- boat races on Pickard's Pond' were won by George Vosper and N Dyer-Hurdon Canoe races were won by E Snell and Bob Sanders
- track and field events included
- putting light stone A Bissett A McNeil

Exeter's celebration of General Buller's Relief of Ladysmith
March 8, 1908

putting heavy stone - A Bissett, A McNeil
hurdle race – E Hodgins R Eacrett
fat men s race T B Carling A Bissett
100 yard race (amateurs) for a silver cup presented by T Fitton - E Hodgins
boys races - T Tyndall A McCallum E Gidley
one-half mile race J McFadden E L Braund
hop, step and jump - E Hodgins and R Eacrett
running long jump – E Hodgins and R Eacrett
standing long jump – W A McLean E Hodgins
100 yard race (open) W A McLean R Eacrett

In the evening a skating carnival was held in the Dominion Roller Rink In the races J Vail won and as a result of this third win Vail kept the trophy A Stanlake, Mary Sanders and Ida Gould were among the winners of prizes for costumes In charge of the day was none other than Nicholas Dyer Hurdon It was a fine day with the only disagreeable element being the dusty roads

On May 24, 1888 five thousand came to Exeter for the celebrations which followed much the same pattern as the day described above Tom Oke was the champion racer of the day A few drunks added a minor discordant note

In other years lacrosse matches were included as in 1896 when St Marys and Exeter played with St Marys winning In that year five teams also competed in a football tournament Bicycle races were also a feature of the day

Early in the century the 24th of May celebrations received impetus from the South African War In 1901 Exeter s celebrations began at 9 o clock with a sham battle depicting the fight at Paardeberg and the surrender of Cronge to Lord Roberts Then followed a grand military parade depicting the entry of Lord Roberts into Bloemfontein and also celebrating the relief of Mafeking The 33rd Huron regiment the school cadets "with guns" and the Exeter band were included in the parade Following the military activities were horse races and a lacrosse game

In speaking of the South Africa War it is worth noting that in February, 1900 news came of the relief of Ladysmith Exeter s "citizens were in a high state of jubilation" Flags appeared all over Exeter, the bells in Trivitt Church were rung guns were fired but it was afterwards learned that the report was erroneous Premature celebrations occurred in various places One report reads as follows and is given because it helps convey the feelings of English Canadians as they were then

> Quite a demonstration was held in our school on Friday last, when our teacher Miss A McGregor heard of the relief of Ladysmith She tolled the bell for fifteen minutes and had the children give three

cheers for Queen Victoria, General Buller, Gen. White, the British Army and our brave Canadian boys. Miss McGregor is a true British subject as well as a first-class teacher and we feel sure that had she been a man she would now be at the front along with the rest of our brave boys facing the Boers, but as it is we know her heart is with them.

Exeter again celebrated the relief of Ladysmith at the appropriate time in May.

Below is the Times' report of Exeter's celebration:

"That the good news of the relief of Ladysmith on Thursday last was received with great rejoicing in Exeter, goes without saying. Never was there a more enthusiastic outburst of loyalty and patriotism manifested in the history of the town. As soon as the news was announced, crowds began to amass, flags were hoisted, bunting stretched, the church bells set ringing, the fire alarm sounded and the whole town went wild with joy. A half holiday was proclaimed by the Reeve and the school was dismissed. At about three o'clock in the afternoon a grand procession was formed in front of the Town Hall and paraded Main Street. The procession was made up of men on horseback, among whom was a striking character of a typical representative of John Bull, in the person of our much esteemed citizen Mr. Robert Leathorn, who sat on his charger with the grace and elegance of a Duke, and who added much to the tone of the concourse; a rig containing Dr. Rollins, Warden of the County, Reeve Bissett, and Councillors Muir, Evans, Levitt and Armstrong; the Exeter Band; about thirty volunteers with Mr. Geo. Harness in command; a boys' brigade hauling with them a miniature cannon; the Firemen and an immense crowd of citizens. After marching up Main Street as far as the Metropolitan Hotel, the band played several appropriate airs; the procession returned, marching down to Huron Street thence back to the Town Hall where the parade halted and the volunteers acquitted themselves excellently in a military drill, after which several volleys were fired, including several rounds from the miniature cannon. The boys then sang very beautifully "Soldiers of the Queen" and the whole crowd "God Save The Queen," followed by three lusty cheers for "Bobs," Buller, Kitchener, White and the Canadians, after which the crowd dispersed. In the evening the jubilation was continued. A large procession was again formed and marched up and down Main Street with the effigy of Cronje, after which a large bonfire was started on the vacant lot opposite the Central Hotel, with the effigy of Cronje surmounting the whole. Fire-arms and fireworks were discharged in profusion and the whole town was wild with excitement."

In May, 1900, N. Dyer Hurdon wrote to General Sir Redvers Buller to congratulate him on his magnificent performance in relieving Ladysmith. Dyer Hurdon explained to General Buller that Exeter was composed of Devon men and was therefore doubly proud of another Devon hero. Mr. Dyer Hurdon had attended Crediton Grammar School when "Squire" Buller the

General's father had been president of the school board.

In December 1900 Dyer Hurdon received a reply from General Buller. In his letter the General noted that in 1864 he had been quartered in London, Ontario and had driven "Over one day to both Crediton and Exeter in order to write home from both those addresses." Mr. Dyer Hurdon said he would keep General Buller's letter for the rest of his life. In 1901 the Times received a letter from Exeter, Devon indicating that donations for a Buller Memorial were being accepted from all parts of the empire. About the same time the firemen sponsored a visit to Exeter by Stanley M. Brown, "The Mail and Empire" war correspondent who had gone to South Africa with the Canadian contingent; his lecture was entitled "To Africa With The Canadians."

One other May 24 celebration that drew five thousand visitors was in 1887. "The wind blew and the rain descended in torrents" but the parade went on and is described as follows:

> "It formed at the North end Fire Hall, marshalled by C. Willis and Jas. Weekes, marched the principal streets in the following order: Band followed by a jubilee car containing a representative of the Queen and representatives of the seven provinces of the Dominion all attired in suitable costumes, with a guard of honour composed of twelve soldiers, under the command of Lieut. Dr. H. K. Hyndman assisted by Sergt. A. Robinson; Firemen — two companies — in uniform; Aldermen in carriages; a carriage containing about twenty small girls all dressed in white and singing at intervals "God Save The Queen" and "The Red White And Blue". Then followed the different trades, the Indian warriors in their native dress, and the pioneer with his log hut upon an old wagon drawn by a yoke of oxen. With the exception of the jubilee car, which was really magnificent, the pioneer's

Sam Sweet's prize-winning entry in the May 24, 1887 parade

> outfit, was most unique. The old man with rifle in hand, the old lady busy at her knitting, while inside the shanty the music of the fiddle was heard, the stag horns on the roof, the coon skins on the sides, with the teamster and cattle and the tattered garments of the whole, all combined gave it a primitive appearance. Much credit is due to Mr. Samuel Sweet, for the genius displayed in the design of the scene presented by the settler's hut. Just before the dismissal at the market for dinner, three cheers were given for the natives of the soil—the Indians, the city fathers, pioneers, and the Queen, after which the band played God Save The Queen, and the children sang the same."

The other events were much the same as in other years with sports, and a band concert.

In 1897 Victoria's Jubilee was celebrated across the empire. An item in the Times of April 29, 1897 reads as follows:

> "The National Anthem will be sung and prayers offered for the Queen on Sunday, June 20 throughout all the colonies of the Empire. "God Save The Queen" is to be sung continuously by the Sons of England throughout the Colonial Empire starting in the Fiji Islands and following the sun around the world, the anthem to be rendered in each place as the sun passes it."

In Exeter N. Dyer Hurdon organized an afternoon of games for the children and an evening of fireworks. Later on Exeter's citizens witnessed "moving photographs" of the Queen's Jubilee procession "as it actually occurred."

Dominion Day in Exeter seldom reached the levels of patriotic fervor that the Queen's Birthday evoked. The day was usually observed by a major race meet and sports. Until 1892 the races were held in the old driving park. In 1892 the twenty fifth anniversary of Confederation was celebrated with the opening of the new driving park. There was also a football game and bicycle races. "The Exeter Brass Band supplied music for the occasion and everything passed off pleasantly." In 1927 the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation was observed in Exeter with a parade, a patriotic program and an historical pageant. In 1954, six thousand people were in Exeter for a parade, alligator wrestling and other such suitable activities for Dominion Day.

Coronations were also suitably observed in town. George V's coronation was celebrated with bonfires and fireworks at the river under Dyer Hurdon's direction. The coronation of George VI was observed with a service at the school which included the planting of two acorns that had been sent from Windsor Forest. A religious service in Trivitt Church followed.

Over the years then, patriotic celebrations observed the Queen's Birthday most fervently. Only minor vestiges of the 24th of May celebrations now remain. Sports and race meets usually commemorated Dominion Day.

The town's parks were usually the scenes of these celebrations as we noted. The fairgrounds and race track area was first used in 1892 as a race track and has become the major sports field. Riverview Park was opened in 1913 as a result of the local Women's Institute obtaining Council's permission to plant trees and beautify the grounds which had been used for pasture up to that time. The village had purchased the land in 1908 from James Howard. At that time there were trees along the south and west sides and along the river. For the opening of the park the grounds were "beautifully decorated with Chinese lanterns and bunting". The band, under Ed Treble's direction, played and Mrs. Hastings of the Women's Institute christened the park as 'Riverview Park'. That night "a large bonfire was made followed by a display of fireworks including paper balloon ascensions and also 'The Storming Of The Fort'." Dyer-Hurdon had arranged for this sham battle to be fought on the opposite side of the river. The boys in the two "armies" used roman candles. Since 1913 the park area has undergone enlargement and improvement so that it is now one of the town's beauty spots. Various groups deserve credit for the present existence of the park. The Women's Institute and the Exeter Horticultural Society, from the early years, together established the original park area, planted trees, and landscaped the area, erected the pillars on Hill Street, built the barbecue and also arranged for some dredging of the pond for swimming. The improvements to the park were not made without opposition. In 1921 the Horticultural Society was criticized for wasting money on the area. It was a dark, dangerous place according to one of the *Times* correspondents. The group, headed by Mr. Buswell, that persuaded the Council not to give the park land for use as a hospital site also deserves credit. In recent decades the Town added to the park land on both sides of the river. Major improvements have been made along the river from the bridge east to the limits of the park. A swimming pool has also been added to the area. Eventually the land known in the past as the "River Commons" west of the Main Street will no doubt become additional park land, as well as the lands lying between Riverview Park and the Morrison Dam area.

Victoria Park was originally designated as a market square but it was seldom used for this purpose and the land was used largely as pasture until the 1880's when some of the villagers decided to beautify the area. The land seems to have been donated to the village about 1885 by Joseph Acheson and Isaac Carling. Dr. Lutz, Robert Sanders, Wm. Creech and others planted the trees. It evidently deteriorated again until about 1897 or 1898 when the village again made an effort to improve the area by further tree planting and the erection of a bandstand. It has been maintained by

the town as a park more or less continuously since the turn of the century although cows grazed there off and on over the years. A wading pool was added in recent decades and the large trees enhance that part of Exeter.

Federal Park, the area on Main Street now occupied by the Post Office, was the open space left when the government purchased the site for the Post Office but then failed to erect a building for many years as we noted previously. The Horticultural Society planted shrubs, trees and flowers including many zinnias. The zinnia is Exeter's civic flower.

The Horticultural Society, incidentally, came into existence in 1922 as a result of the efforts of Reeve B. W. F. Beavers, J. S. Harvey, who became the first President of the Society, J. G. Stanbury, the first Secretary, G. S. Howard, and S. J. Hogarth. The first Vice-President was Jean Murray. Honorary Presidents named in 1922 were Dr. Hyndman and Isaac Carling. It was the Horticultural Society that selected the Giant Zinnia as Exeter's flower. This group of public-spirited citizens not only worked on Riverview Park, Federal Park, the Community Centres Park and Victoria Park, but also improved the grounds around the Library and Town Hall. At the rear of the Town Hall where the weigh scales were located, cattle created a mess. Garbage littered the area. In the 1920's the Society cleaned up these public areas, planted shrubs, flowers and trees and provided benches in front of the Library. A garden was developed just west of the old public school, the plants were all identified with a marker. Trees were provided free to those citizens who wished to plant them. Flower shows were held and the Society did everything possible to encourage civic pride in the appearance of the village.

In its early years the Horticultural Society had over one hundred members. Dues were one dollar and the province provided a small grant as well to the society.

Popular events in the past in Exeter were the skating races and the carnivals. Both ice skating and roller skating were popular amusements. The first ice skating rink was probably located approximately where the Town Hall now stands. In 1877 the Exeter skating rink was selling family season tickets for three dollars. On March 8, 1877 the Times reported that "The rink is crowded nightly, the frosts of the past few days making skating excellent." The editor urged the people to skate, stating that it was "a healthy and invigorating exercise." There were carnivals and races on this outdoor rink, but the first "skating carnival that ever took place in Exeter under cover was held in the rink in the drill shed" in January 1885. According to the report there was "a good crowd both of spectators and masked and costumed skaters." There were ex

hibitions of fast and fancy skating and "altogether the carnival passed off very pleasantly". Messrs. James Weekes and Samuel Sweet operated the rink calling it the Royal Skating Rink. People skated to the music of harmonica, violin and guitar.

Ice skating carnivals remained popular for decades and everyone of the six rinks that Exeter has had were scenes of these colourful events. In February 1900 a carnival was held in Bawden's Rink in aid of the Red Cross Fund. The festivities started with a parade led by the band and twenty of the volunteers captained by George Harness. The costumes in the carnival were excellent and the judges C. H. Sanders, N. Dyer Hurdon and F. E. Karn awarded prizes to Miss G. Hicks, Gertie Kemp, Mrs. P. Bawden, W. Hern and Edgar Bissett.

Exeterites would often travel to other centres for these carnivals and races as they did in the winter of 1886 when Sam Sweet, James Bissett, and Chris Willis won prizes in Parkhill. Bissett placed second in a three-mile race. Carnivals remained popular and frequent events until fairly recent decades in town. The band often provided the music.

Roller skating in the Dominion Roller Rink was popular as long as the rink stood. As we note elsewhere it existed for only about seven years. The best roller skater in Exeter in the 1880's was John Vail. In one five-mile race in 1886 George Eacrett raced neck and neck with Vail for seventy laps around the rink but Vail finally pulled ahead. Vail raced for money against skaters from neighbouring towns. On April 8, 1886, for example, Vail and Robert Cornyn of Wingham raced for $25.00 and the championship of Huron County. "Cornyn made a good start leaving Vail nearly half a lap behind . . . until the 30th round when Vail closed on him and at the 60th lap glided past". The race was five miles long which was 80 laps and Vail's time was 17 minutes and 15 seconds. The Times remarked that Vail had "remarkable control of his nerves" and exhibited "remarkable staying qualities". Said the Times, "five miles scarcely warms him up". It was reported that considerable money changed hands. A return race in Wingham was declared a draw. According to the report Cornyn tripped Vail as Vail passed him on the 78th lap. The "unsportsmanlike Winghamites" charged Vail $1.50 to practice. Vail challenged Cornyn to race for $500.00 in London but evidently the Wingham skater did not accept.

There was a big carnival on New Year's Eve in 1886. This event was part of Exeter's festivities that year which also included a ball and supper at the "Lorne Hotel". The night ended with a brawl in the streets which Constable Gill finally terminated. The music for these roller skating carnivals was supplied by the brass band and harmonic band. The Dominion Roller Rink collapsed in

December 1892 In 1947 an outdoor rink was opened in Exeter by E. Neil This rink ceased to operate some years ago

Figure skating has also provided recreation in Exeter for a number of years

Another activity that went on in the rink was horseshoe pitching In the summer of 1929 the Dome Rink management laid out five horseshoe "courts" A club was organized with Fred Ellerington as President On May 24 1930 a horseshoe tournament was held under the supervision of the Dominion of Canada Horseshoe Pitchers Association. The Dominion champions were there as well as many other excellent players Horseshoe pitching has enjoyed off and on popularity in Exeter At present the game is not played in Exeter The last area used for play was the rear yard of the blacksmith shop at the corner of Huron and Main streets

Bicycle riding was introduced in Exeter in the early 1880's Messrs Verity, Bowerman and Gundy were among the first in the village to own "wheels" People rode all over the area Rides to Goderich, Hensall and Dashwood were frequent In the summer of 1886 one man got lost when he rode from Exeter to Dashwood to Khiva thence to Crediton where he stayed overnight Bicycles scared the horses as the following item from 1884 indicates Three Lucan boys in a buggy met a bicycle south of Exeter The horse was frightened and threw the buggy into the ditch resulting in a broken leg for one of the boys In 1892 a bicycle club was organized with Dr Lutz as President and N Dyer Hurdon as Vice-President There were twelve members including A J McTavish Frank Wood W Browning Ed Carley and Frank Lutz The club was active for several years holding regular rides and entering members in various races W E Browning was considered to be the County Champion in the 2 mile race His time was five minutes and forty nine seconds A noteworthy ride was one by George Southcott who is reported to have ridden to Toronto and back in one day

Other amusements were organized by the Y P C A which existed in the early 1870's In those early years it held debates, socials oyster suppers and so on In 1920 and 1921 Y P C A clubrooms were established on the second floor of the old Pickard building Men such as Frank Boyle and J S Harvey had gone to the James Street Church Board for support of the project In January 1921 the rooms were opened and by May of that year a bowling alley had been installed and the rooms admirably fitted for youthful recreation The Directors were R N Rowe, J M Southcott G S Howard Wm Rivers R Welsh F Boyle and W S Cole Various team sports were sponsored by this organization which carried on for a number of years

Scouts also provided an activity for the youth In 1915 R G

Seldon had tried to organize a Scout group but was not successful. By 1921 however, there was an active group with Tom Pryde as Scoutmaster and J. M. Harvey Assistant Scoutmaster and W. S. Stanbury as troop leader. In the early 1920's some of the Exeter scouts went to a model camp at the Toronto Exhibition. The boys were Reg Beavers, Ted Taman, George Hind, Derry Boyle and Harold Whyte. Stuart Stanbury was the first King Scout in Exeter receiving the award in 1926. Various men have led the Scouts over the past fifty years since the first Charter was issued. Ted Buswell, Harold Whyte, Alf Andrus, Owen Atkinson, Harvey Pfaff, Don Traquair, Rene Van der Nent, Terry Lawrence, Hal Hooke, Ralph Sweitzer, and Doug Harrison are some. Cubs, Rovers, Brownies, Guides and Rangers have also operated. The first Guide Company was formed in 1931 with Ruby Creech and Marion Woods as leaders.

Many other activities could be discussed here. There was a Canada Club. There were excursions by rail and boat. The introduction of new forms of amusements such as radio, phonographs, and television were the occasion of village amusement. For example, in July, 1904 Robert Sanders gave a free concert in the Town Hall with his new "magnificent gramophone". Mr. Wilbur Martin assisted Mr. Sanders to "manipulate the machine" as it played the 'Good Old Summer Time', 'Lead Kindly Light' and the Vesper Service by the Hayden Quartette. In the summer of 1949 Reg Beavers' store displayed a television set and the store was a popular place as people stared at the tube. In 1946 Willards Ontario Panorama was broadcast from the Exeter Arena by Gordon Sinclair and Allan Savage who interviewed Jack Green, Mrs. J. G. Cochrane, Ed. Sweitzer and Preston Dearing.

The bowling alley was opened in 1948. The poolroom opened in 1937. After over sixty years of resistance to the evil, Exeter's governing body relented but only after the village Solicitor told Council that they could not restrict a lawful business. In 1955 when Red Scott took over the local billiard emporium he staged a Council Tournament. Mayor Pooley and Reeve Mackenzie battled over the green felt. This was a far cry from the days when Councillors would not even permit a poolroom let alone enter one.

A major feature of the Exeter scene for well over one hundred years has been the Fair. The Exeter Fair can trace its origins to 1845. In that year the London Road Branch of the Agricultural Society was established. In 1854 the Exeter Branch of the Agricultural Society replaced the London Road Branch. This organization included the people in the Townships of Usborne and Stephen. By 1857 there were 87 members and the Board of Agriculture in Upper Canada in 1857 reported that the Usborne

and Stephen Agricultural Society had good sheep, good cows and the best hogs in the County. The first fair was held in Exeter in 1854 and over the years in the 1850's and 1860's the fair was "noted for its prosperity and the number of fine animals annually brought out". The Fair has operated, then, for nearly 120 years.

The schools and churches also contributed to the Village's amusements. Separate chapters will discuss these institutions and their contributions to village life.

The remark by "The Burkley's resident sociologists" in an article in the U.W.O. Gazette said that in Exeter "the rich curl, the middle classes bowl and the lower classes play darts" does not bear examination. In Exeter almost all sports and entertainments have enjoyed the support of all "social classes". Until recently, Exeter's activities, like those of all small communities needed the support of most of the population to succeed.

chapter 6

Sport in Exeter

Everybody loves a winner but it takes real civic pride to get out and support a team until it becomes a winner.

(C. E. Boyle)

Over the years sports of various kinds have been played in Exeter. Sport provided small town Ontario with an opportunity of making contact with the neighbouring towns. Sport provided an important outlet for the men of nineteenth century small town Ontario: men worked long hard hours but they still looked forward to participation in some form of athletic activity and the competition it provided. Women did not have the same opportunity to become involved in sports until after 1920.

Sport provides small town Ontario with an important source of the legends and myths of the small town. Every town has its sports heroes. Exeter has its share of sports heroes whose feats are recounted from time to time in the lodge halls, coffee shops and arenas: Dick Seldon's bowling feats, the three Pickard boys' hockey ability, "Goldie" Cochrane, Tom Carling's "no hitters", "Babe" Siebert, "Derry" Boyle (Sr. and Jr.), "Boom" Gravett, Si Creech's hitting and fielding, Tom Yearley's horses, Bill Oberle, Johnny

Rether and many others would be included in an Exeter sports hall of fame.

Some towns win more than their share of Ontario or Canadian championships Exeter has not won many championships in any sports As far as can be determined Exeter had never won an All Ontario hockey championship until 1972 when the Ontario Junior D Championship came to Exeter Several teams—Intermediates in the early 1920's, Midgets and Juniors in 1971 have come close The 1971 Novice team won the equivalent of an Ontario championship and that was the closest Exeter came to an Ontario Championship until 1972 The Exeter Midget baseball team won a provincial championship in 1956 to bring the only all-Ontario baseball championship ever to come to Exeter

In 1950 the Exeter Maroons, a junior basketball team won the Ontario Basketball Association championship to put Exeter on the Ontario basketball map Numerous lawn bowling championships came to Exeter in the years immediately before and after the First World War Indeed Exeter remained an important lawn bowling centre for twenty years or more after World War I and still boasts a fine green

Audrey Pooley won the All Ontario Junior Badminton Championship and finished second in the Canadian Tournament She was a citizen of Stratford at the time but perhaps Exeter can now lay claim to her athletic prowess

There is a story unconfirmed that Exeter won some type of Canadian lacrosse championship in the 1880's but no information seems to be available

Championships are not everything, however, and Exeter need not be unduly concerned that so few championships have come to the town Participation in sports has always been maintained at a high level in the town There have been town leagues local tournaments church leagues, spontaneously organized events, school sports as well as inter town competition The variety of sports played is impressive and the numbers of participants equally as impressive

It was also apparent that from the beginning of sports activities in town "all sorts and conditions of men" played at all of the sports Exeter like other small towns in Ontario in the nineteenth century and early years of this century had a socially stratified community but an examination of the names of the players would reveal that members of Exeter's more socially prominent families played the various games with the less socially prominent folk Indeed the leadership in sport came from the men who might be described as the community leaders Charges that certain sports were more socially acceptable than others cannot be substantiated in Exeter since one can find names from all sections of the community listed as participants in all sports.

A sketch of each of the various sports played in Exeter over the years follows.

HOCKEY

> "While the game of ice hockey was in some respects solely Canadian it was also indebted to early Europeans who developed the art of skating and to those Britons who conceived the idea of playing a form of field hockey on frozen English fens."
>
> (from One-Hundred-Not-Out, Henry Roxborough)

This game on ice was called bandy on ice and used a ball. One of the first games played in Canada occurred in Montreal in 1837. There were eight players goal, point, cover-point, centre, rover, home, right side, left side. Shinny was referred to in Kingston in the 1840's as being played by the soldiers garrisoned there. There is, apparently, evidence that garrison troops in Halifax in the 1700's played a game copied from the Indians called hurley on ice. The troops put on skates and adopted the Indians' game. There is reference to "hoquet" (hockey on ice) in Acadia. It is not part of this work to attempt a recounting of the history of hockey, consequently suffice to say that by 1890 hockey had spread across Ontario and on November 27, 1890 the Ontario Hockey Association was founded. By 1900 the game of shinny on your own side though still rough was welcomed by all classes of society, from urchins playing on the streets to governors-general and silk hatted friends sitting in regal boxes at crowd-filled arenas.

It is difficult, if not impossible to determine when the first game of hockey was played in Exeter. No doubt boys played shinny on the pond above the grist mill dam during the late 1880's and some hockey may have been played on the outdoor rink operated by James Weekes and Sam Sweet on the site of the town hall, on property then owned by J. N. Howard. This outdoor rink existed in the 1870's. These two later used the old Drill Hall as a rink. It was located approximately where the present horse barn stands on the Fair Grounds. Hockey may have been played there as well in the 1880's. It is doubtful if hockey was played to any extent, though, before the late 1880's since hockey did not get started even in Toronto before the late 1880's. The rinks of Weekes and Sweet were used chiefly for skating. The rink in the Drill Shed was called the "Royal Skating Rink" and was opened for skating in 1884. There is, however, no record of hockey ever being played in this rink which was the first covered rink in Exeter. The second covered rink in town was located at the south west corner of Andrew and John Streets. This rink, "The Dominion Roller Rink", extended from where the former R. N. Creech house stands, southwards. This rink was primarily a roller rink but sawdust was spread over the boards and ice put in during the winter Again there is no indication that hockey was ever played in this rink which collapsed on December 2, 1892 only seven years after its erection in 1885

The first indoor rink on which hockey was played was on Peter Bawden's rink which was located on Laughall Street (Gidley East) across from where the high school now stands This rink had a row of pillars down either side While the skaters could skate around the outside perimeter the hockey players had to dodge the pillars Players undoubtedly "kept their heads up" in those days The rink was more suited for skating races, carnivals, recreational skating and curling than it was for hockey Nevertheless, in the 1890's hockey was played in this rink despite the hazards of the pillars

The first organized hockey played in Exeter began in the late 1890's On February 16 1897 Exeter defeated Clinton 6 to 5 this game was preceded by public skating and by races In the races John Spackman defeated Fred Hawkshaw in the two-mile event A few games were played in 1898 with Exeter playing various nearby towns such as Hensall Clinton and Seaforth One of the games in 1898 was described in length some excerpts from this description are given

> "A fast exciting, and phenomenally close match was the result of the meeting between Seaforth and Exeter teams Tuesday night The game was called shortly after 8 p m The home team however had not yet awakened from dreams of what they were going to do with Seaforth and first thing they knew the score was 1-0 ... this woke the boys up ... and after fifteen minutes of hard fast work a shot by Tremaine made the score 1 all (Seaforth then went ahead 3-1 but Exeter fought back to tie the score) A splendid rush and scoring shot by Willis brought down the house and the score stood 3-all (Then) Tremaine got the puck carried it up the side, passed it to Evans who in turn sent it to Willis and the score stood 4-3 Fortune now deserted Exeter ... and four minutes before time a shot by 'Stonewall' Jackson evened the score Now came the "most unkindest cut of all" Seaforth scored the winning goal at the exact moment that the bell called Time ... A particularly good game was put up by the defence Messrs Gidley and Dignan"

The organization of hockey in Exeter in 1899 was the responsibility of the following men

Hon President - Reeve Spackman
President N D Hurdon
Vice President – Dr Rollins
2nd V President Joseph Senior
3rd V President P L Bishop
Treasurer R N Creech
Secretary – B C Gidley

Captain - Frank Snell
Manager - Chas. H. Snell

Managing Committee
R. C. C. Tremaine
C. H. Sanders
Frank Willis

As the century turned, hockey was operating in Exeter in a fairly well organized way. There were two town teams, a Junior and Senior team. The games were played on Bawden's Rink and directed by a committee as mentioned above. The admission charge was 15¢ for "gents", 10¢ for "ladies and children". Games were played against neighbouring villages and towns. In one game against Clinton, "Mallet in goal for Exeter made some excellent stops" and "Creech at cover point proved a speedy man on his skates and handled his stick well". The Advocate observed that "The Exeter team are a quiet gentlemanly set". The 1901 team consisted of the following seven men all of whom played the entire game in those days without a break except for the half time period. There were two halves instead of three periods at that time. The players in 1901 were F. Taylor (goal), F. Hawkshaw (point), D. Evans (cover point) and forwards, one of whom was rover, L. Cann, W. West, B. Hooper and R. Southcott.

In 1902 the team took the name Exeter "Devons" and consisted of Dignan (goal), Snell (point), Hawkshaw (cover point) and forwards Evans, Russell, Southcott, Cann and Hardy. The boys played a rough game in Parkhill one night in February and tied 5 to 5 but Parkhill was overly dirty and the "goal umpire was apparently crosseyed". The "Devons" in December 1903 were Exeter's first entry into Ontario Hockey Association play. With their new red and white sweaters the "Devons" entered an Intermediate league with the London St. Johns, St. Marys and Watford. The Parkhill Gazette, ever high in praise of Exeter observed that before the season ended the Exeter Devons would be the Exeter "Deaduns". The team captain was Sandy Bawden and the Executive consisted of W. W. Taman, W. J. Heaman, E. W. Horne and R. N. Creech. Honorary members of the Executive were N. D. Hurdon, A. Q. Bobier and F. E. Karn. The players and the executive paid a membership to belong to the club. P. Bawden provided practice time on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for the team.

The opening game was January 1904 with Exeter defeating St. Marys 5 to 3. St. Marys came by train and were late. "The work done by the home team was of first class order". Exeter's players were Myers in goal who "stopped shots that looked like winners", Ross on point whose "lifting puts the puck from end to end of the rink directly on the opposite nets it was a feature of the game; Ford on coverpoint Bawden (rover) Hawkshaw (right wing) Hickey (centre) McColmbe (left wing) This was the first O H A game ever played in Exeter Exeter however had less luck with the St Johns Athletic Club of London "The London rink was much larger and threw our boys off" and Exeter lost 5 to 1 London went on to win the League In Junior play that year Exeter won several games against Ailsa Craig Hensall and Clinton The Ailsa Craig paper complained that the Exeter boys were too "rough and tough"

In 1912 hockey was given a new lease in Exeter when Mr William Leavitt opened "The Dome Rink" on the Gould property opposite the Town Hall (the present site of McKerlie Automotive) It extended back onto the property now occupied by the Legion The formal opening took place on January 15 1912 The Advocate reported the opening as follows

> "The formal opening of the skating rink took place in the form of a carnival Reeve W J Heaman and Rev D W Collins were present and delivered inaugural addresses in which they referred to the enterprise and worthy citizenship of the proprietor William Leavitt, in erecting such a magnificent place of amusement for those who enjoy the exhilarating pastime of skating or the roaring game of curling"

The building was of corrugated iron, it had a circular dome roof and was "one of the finest in Western Ontario with a magnificent sheet of ice 180 feet long and 80 feet wide 25 feet of ice was partitioned off to provide ice for curling The rink would seat 300 In the opening carnival prizes were won by Oscar Anderson and Owen Atkinson in the mile race Maurice Senior and Harry Parsons won in the half mile race Costume prizes were won by Ernest Harvey (Indian Chief) Latimer Grieve (squaw), Olive and Leon Treble The new town band was in attendance The Bawden rink was closed when the Dome opened and was eventually converted by Ted Bawden to the manufacture of cement blocks pillars and other concrete products The Dome Rink collapsed in December 1927 Mr Leavitt had rented the rink that year to Mr Frank M Boyle It was re-erected and collapsed again in 1934 leaving the town without a rink Some would suggest that the "golden age" of hockey in Exeter was lived in the old Dome Rink during the 1920's

In any case one of the first hockey games ever played in the Dome was between Hensall and Exeter Juniors which Exeter won 5 to 4 The Hensall Observer noted that "in the first half Hensall played the Exeter team to a standstill and Exeter seeing that they could not win by playing hockey started to rough it and if a Hensall player got hold of the puck in the second half he was lucky to come out without a few broken bones This is usual with the Exeter bunch who are noted for being poor sports The crowd managed to swipe quite a bunch of caps and gloves and everything of value left in the Hensall boys' coats

The Advocate remarked "It is regrettable that the Hensall fellows could not take a defeat without passing all kinds of dirty insinuations in which there is not a particle of truth

An Exeter team consisting of F Graham (goal) H Elliott (point), J E Elliott (cover point), S Fisher (rover), T Carling (centre) Earl Southcott (right wing) and O Atkinson (left wing) defeated Hensall 6 to 5 in another game that year

Hockey continued to expand and in 1914 an active Town League operated There were four teams the Oddfellows, Clerks Bankers and High School All of the players cannot be named here but one or two from each team are given

Oddfellows	Frank Boyle J M Southcott
Clerks	Clarence Pickard J Elliott
Bankers	Allan Pickard W Snell
High School	Cecil Pickard E Southcott

In addition the Town team played various games The 1914 team had T Penhale (goal) R Atkinson (defence) B Rivers (defence) Snell (rover) Earl Southcott (center) A Pickard (right wing) C Pickard (left wing) other players included N E Harrington and S Elliott In one game E Southcott got 5 goals and Al Pickard 4 as Exeter defeated Lucan 13 to 3 In March of 1914 a team consisting of players from Zurich Hensall Seaforth and Toronto under the name of Zurich defeated Exeter The Times said that it took those four places to beat Exeter In that game the Toronto man was a peach

Throughout the decade 1910-20 Exeter s hockey teams played well Such stars as Allan Pickard Clarence Pickard Russ Southcott E Southcott Goldie Cochrane 'Tiny Torrance (Whose fondness for talking was responsible for opposition goals) Rivers Harvey Atkinson M Senior provided the spectators at the Dome Rink with plenty of entertainment There were junior and senior teams and the rivalry with nearby communities was strong If Exeter lost the Advocate and the Times could be depended upon to comment For example, a loss to Ailsa Craig in 1915 drew the following observations

> 'The referee made a mess of things from the start the visitors had came to win and the referee was out to give them everything He never saw an offside unless made by an Exeter player Slashing tripping and whaltoping were in order Earl Southcott was struck in the chest

Among the players mentioned during this period were the

Pickards Allan Clare and Cecil. Cecil was killed in the First World War Clare became an important community leader and Allan went to the west where he remained until his retirement. As J. M. Southcott remarked "The Pickards, like the others played for the love of the game. They provided their own hockey sticks and equipment as well as having to pay for practicing at the rink". In those years Heaman's store was selling hockey sticks for prices ranging from ten cents to one dollar. In 1916, Heamans had a special on Automobile Skates at one dollar to five dollars.

Allan Pickard went on to become the most well known and most important hockey figure to come from Exeter. Allan moved west about 1920. He eventually became a school principal in Regina. He played hockey for various teams in the west later coaching such teams as the Regina Aces. He held various offices in the C.A.H.A. and W.H.L. He was president of the C.A.H.A. in 1947 the Regina Leader Post said in that year

> "Most centres have their own Mr. Hockey but the real one is in Regina — Alan W. Pickard is president of the C.A.H.A. and controls more hockey players than any man in the world"

Mr Pickard was recognized in 1958 as one of Canada's leading hockey figures when he was elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame. He was added to the list of "hockey builders" at the same time as Senator Donat Raymond, George McNamara, George Dudley, James Norris, Conn Smyth, and Lloyd Turner. The accomplishments and contributions to hockey of Allan Pickard are probably not widely known to the younger citizens of Exeter but Exeter is proud that a native son is ranked in the Hockey Hall of Fame with the other greats of the game.

The decade closed with Exeter having established a good basis for hockey in the 1920's. An important hockey figure in those days was "Derry" Boyle Sr who managed some of the teams. His barbershop was a headquarters for sport and as winter approached the boys met there to organize the town league and the town teams. They had lots of time in the fall since ice was frequently not ready until late December

Frank "Derry" Boyle

or early January The season ended in March with games often being played on water-covered ice Of course natural ice continued to be common in most small towns and the author can remember how the kids would look forward to the coming of the cold weather and to the process of ice making in the local rink

Early Exeter Hockey Team — Members of the Exeter hockey team in the year 1913 or 1914 were top row C. V Pickard right wing "Tiny" Tarrance sub-goalie inset Clarence Hoffman Al Pickard right wing Bert Rivers, defence bottom row Cecil Pickard who lost his life in the First Great War Earl Southcott centre "Derry" Boyle manager Bill Kydd goalie and Morris Senior

A second member of the Hockey Hall of Fame has an association with Exeter Charles Albert "Babe" Siebert played for Exeter or more accurately the Exeter-Zurich Intermediate team in 1921 and 1922 Siebert was born in Plattsville in 1904 His family moved to Zurich when he was about six He was in addition to being an outstanding hockey player, a fine baseball player and played on the 1920 Zurich Intermediate team which won the All Ontario Intermediate Championship Siebert played left field He began playing hockey in Zurich but it was in 1922 that he attracted widespread attention while playing for the Exeter Zurich Intermediate team The following year he played Junior in Kitchener and later he played for the Niagara Falls Senior team In

HOCKEY HALL OF FAME
AL PICKARD

Al Pickard's Plaque in the Hockey Hall of Fame

1925 he began his professional career with the Montreal Maroons. He also played with the New York Rangers and the Boston Bruins where he played defence with Eddie Shore. He ended his fourteen-year playing career in 1939 with the Montreal Canadiens.

> "During his term with the N.H.L. Babe developed one of the hardest shots in the league; as both a left winger and a defenceman he scored 140 goals and assisted in 159 others. On three different occasions he was named to the first all star team."

In 1937 he was awarded the Hart Trophy as the most valuable player in the league. In the summer of 1939 he was named coach of the Canadiens.

Tragically, Siebert never did take over the coaching duties. On Friday, August 24, 1939 he drowned at St. Joseph.

> Shortly before 4 p.m. Siebert with his two daughters Judie 11 and Joan 10 went with Clayton Hoffman to the lake. They went in bathing by the old wooden pier at St. Joseph. When one of the children saw the inflated tire she was using for a float carried out from her depth by waves she asked her father to recover it. Siebert swam out and was about to grab the tire which had floated about 150 feet from shore

when he shouted for help Hoffman swam out (but) he could find no sign of his chum the search continued early Monday morning the body was recovered "

The early 1920's, then, were important hockey years in Exeter In 1920 Exeter and Zurich combined to enter an O H A Intermediate Team "Goldie" Cochrane was named coach and Derry Boyle manager The Advocate remarked that "Goldie" is a pro-hockey player and knows the game with the best of them" Clayton "Big Dodo" Hoffman was to be the captain (Hoffman later became a teacher in Galt) The Executives in the club were Major Heaman (President) Tony Wurm (Vice-President), T R Ferguson (Secretary) and Bill Brown (Treasurer) The home games were to be played in the "Dome" Rink operated by "Goldie" Cochrane's father-in-law Mr Leavitt Cochrane by the way had established quite a hockey reputation before coming to Exeter He was considered "to have been one of the four greatest hockey players ever to play in Kitchener" In 1951 at the opening of the new Kitchener Arena Frank Selke paid tribute to "Goldie" placing him in the same category as a player with Milt Schmidt Jim Coleman and Art Hiller Cochrane played Senior A hockey in Kitchener with the Flying Dutchmen He played in Michigan with Houghton in an early league called the Copper League and he played for the first Montreal Canadien team in 1910 He also played in Galt. During the First World War he served with the Canadian Army and was wounded at St Eloi "Goldie" died in 1952

In these early years of the 1920's Exeter was in an Intermediate Group with St Marys Mitchell, Goderich and Clinton In 1921 the team consisted of Dick Harness in goal Clayton "Big Dodo" Hoffman and Hindmarsh on defence, Clarence "Little Dodo" Hoffman centre S Robinson from Ailsa Craig right wing, E J R Bertram left wing Substitutes M Senior, Siebert, Callfas, O'Brien This 1921 team in their "nifty" green and gold uniforms won the group and proceeded to play Stratford for the honours in the Northern Hockey League Senior group In the first game of the two game total goals series Exeter Zurich won 6 to 4 in the Dome "The sudden halt to Stratford's chain of victories came as a surprise to the visitors" This was Stratford's first loss of the season In the second game Stratford defeated Exeter 6 to 2 to win the series by two goals Two hundred fans went by train from Exeter Bertram who checked Howie Morenz into the ice was injured when Morenz finally slashed Bertram across the knee Babe Siebert then took Bertram's place This may have been the first game in which the two future stars of N H L Howie Morenz and Babe Siebert, met in a game The report of the game said "Morenz at centre for the home team played a fast game and was easily the best man on the Stratford team" He was a recruit from the Juniors to strengthen the Intermediates and he scored three of the six goals scored by Stratford

Besides Morenz the Stratford lineup included Malone in goal Berger Carroll Kelterbourne R and B Lovell The Exeter team had McGeough in goal (Dick Harness played goal in the first game) Hindmarsh and Hoffman on defence, Bertram Hoffman and Robinson on the forward line andSiebertas a substitute It was reported that "Sid Rankin of London a Stratford Old Boy handled the bell and he showed that his heart was with the old town Exeter drew the heavy end of his decisions"

The report of the first game noted that Siebert was "A dark horse and we are going to spring something with him very soon"

Hindmarsh and Hoffman were considered to be "a stone wall a real pair of men" Bertram had "a great poke check" and Stu Robinson was a "classy player". The players of 1921 were basically the same players that went on to greater success in 1922

The 1922 Intermediate team had Cook from Hensall in goal, D Harness sub goalie, Hindmarsh and Hoffman on defence, with Clarence Hoffman Robinson and Siebert on the forward line. Other players were McKinnon, Callfas and George This team won their Intermediate group again In the O H A playoffs the team eliminated Sarnia in the two game goals to count series losing the first game in Sarnia 4 to 2 but winning the second 11 to 6 The loss to Sarnia was on Feb 17 and was the first loss of the season Apparently the Sarnia goal keeper handled 59 shots and Cook handled 29 In the second game "They even made the fans who have been following them sit up and take notice for it was not thought that they could uncork such speed and stick handling" Other comments on the game included

> 'The forward line are showing some hair raising stuff'
> "Cook played the game of his life"
> "They are a bunch of all-stars"
> "The defence broke up the Sarnia rushes with ease"
> "A cleaner pair of players never donned a uniform"

The Intermediates then went against Kitchener in their quest for the O H A Intermediate Championship but they lost out to "a real hockey team' The report of the game suggested that "our boys were off in their shooting" Dodo Hoffman was out of the game "through illness' Hindmarsh had a sore shoulder and the referee was poor and was "booed and we think it was coming to him" The Times said 'The local team played a clean, snappy game and took their defeat like gentlemen

That team may have been the best team, relative to the period of history that Exeter ever iced In addition to Siebert who did play in the National Hockey League it is said that Clarence Hoffman also was National League calibre

In the middle and later years of the 1920 s Exeter continued to play Intermediate hockey in various leagues but did not come as close to an O H A Championship as it did in 1922 In 1925 the players were Cook in goal M Hey Leroy O Brien on defence, Shaddock H Wells L Statham on the forward line, and L O Brien and H Hogarth as substitutes Exeter also had a Junior team in some of the years of the 1920's including 1924 when Walper, Hey Statham Hind O Brien and others formed the team. In the latter years of the 1920's Exeter was in the "Cyclone League" with Hensall Zurich and Dashwood Some of the more prominent players who played for Exeter in the Cyclone League years of the 1920 s were George Moir (goal), Bruce Tuckey and George Hind (defence) Harvey Pollen (centre), Pete Willard, Bruce Medd Bill Lawson and Harvey Snell

In addition to the Intermediate hockey and Junior hockey there were town league teams and indeed two girls' hockey teams. One consisted of Florence Harvey (goal) Mildred Rowe, Mary Elworthy (defence) wings Gartie Francis Peg Wethey Amalia Acheson centre

The Junior team won their group in 1930 The players were goal Bunny Ford defence, Munn Passmore, centre Snell wings, Creech and Joynt Subs were Boyle Howey and Pryde Basically the same team with the addition of Foster and Yungblut played Junior again in 1931 In one 1931 game " Boyle bulged the twine " to break a 30 minute overtime game

One of Exeter s players suffered a serious injury in 1933 and it took place in a friendly game between Crediton and Main Street United Churches Harvey Pollen lost an eye as a result of this injury In the early 30 s Exeter continued to enter Intermediate hockey and Junior hockey The Intermediate players included Dick Harness, Hap Wells Bruce Tuckey Derry Boyle, Rus Snell, Si Creech Leroy O Brien, Ed Gascho and Yungblut The Juniors included Welsh Passmore Foster, Pryde, Joynt, Boyle and Yungblut The stamina of the players was indicated by one event in 1930 when the players went by sleigh to Hensall over blocked roads. Cars started out for the game and "with digging and shovelling, pushing and pulling they got through" After the game players had to walk home to Exeter from Hensall some not getting home till 5 a.m

In 1934 the Dome rink collapsed for the second time and Exeter was without a rink until the fall of 1936 when the town undertook to construct a new rink In the winter of 1936 public meetings were held to discuss building a rink. Such men as A. Traquair

George Lawson, T. Pryde, F. W. Gladman, C. V. Pickard, J. G. Stanbury, R. G. Seldon and Fred Ellerington lent their support to the project. Some prominent citizens such as W. D. Sanders opposed the project. Others also opposed the arena which was to have other facilities as well. One writer to the Times said:

> "Can we hope that the combination of skating rink, dance hall, euchre playing rooms, assembly hall and agriculture display rooms will be a success . . . Dance halls with their accompanying drinking of beer and other spiritous liquor are a curse to any town . . . Our young people are being debauched . . . Our churches are humiliated . . . ."

The Times Editor supported the Arena as did a majority of ratepayers who voted that the village erect the arena by a margin of 215 to 129.

The Ontario Municipal Board approved the project in October 1936. W. D. Sanders was still opposed, he noted that the town had spent five hundred dollars on relief in 1934 and in 1935, $1,016.63. Taxes were too high! The Rev. Mr. Down felt that the fair board, those wishing a school gym and those wishing a rink "railroaded" the project through. He said it was not in the interest of the retired farmer. W. D. Sanders said the voting had been irregular. Reeve Tom Pryde who was Chairman of the Building Committee and Council supported the project and construction began in November 1937. The contractor was N. Hipel of Preston. The ice surface was 70 x 170 feet, the gym was 40 x 72 feet. The gym was to be used by the high school. It was reported to be "the only one of its kind in Ontario."

The building cost $10,000. It was paid for by a debenture issue. Debentures at par were one hundred dollars but sold for $104 bearing 4% interest. The building was erected in seven weeks. Unfortunately the mild weather delayed the making of ice until mid February. The arena was opened on Tuesday, February 16 for public skating. The first hockey game in the new arena was played between Dashwood and Exeter. The line ups for this first game were: for Exeter: Creech, defence; Ford goal; N. Wells defence; McDonald centre. Wings were Willard and Cornish; subs Hockey, Laing, Dinney, Buswell, Norton, Ryckman. The line up for Dashwood included Goetz, Tieman, Restemeyer, K. Wein, W. Wein, Klamp, Kellerman, Hopcroft, Guenther, Ness, Eveland. The referee was Charles Triebner. Exeter won the game on a goal by Creech.

So Exeter had a new arena. The sixth to serve the town. At the time it was built it was given a life of thirty years but it is still standing at the time of this writing. The Arena Board was to consist of three councillors, one school board member, one fair board member, and two businessmen. The arena or Community Centres

Board continued to administer the arena and adjacent park until the 1960's when a new Municipal Committee responsible for recreation, the arena, and parks was formed

For the balance of the pre war years Exeter entered the Cyclone League which varied from year to year in its make up but usually had entries from Zurich Hensall Exeter and sometimes from Dashwood Crediton and Lucan These pre-war players included "Si" Creech who played "outstanding hockey" and was perhaps the best stick handler on the team Bob Dinney Gene Beaver Vern Heywood, Rus Snell, C Cornish Bunny Ford Reg McDonald Wes Ryckman and others The Cyclone League champion from 1926 to 1938 inclusive was the Zurich team In 1939 Hensall won the MacMillan cup symbolic of Cyclone League supremacy

There were two town hockey leagues for boys sponsored by the Lions Club There were four teams for boys aged nine to twelve and four teams for boys aged thirteen to sixteen In order to play the boys had to have certification from the principal that their schoolwork was satisfactory In addition the boys could not smoke, swear or loiter around the arena There were a large number of players and few were suspended consequently they must have been adept at concealing their sins since few boys could measure up in all of those categories

High school hockey also occupied ice time during the late 1930's The high school players included Southcott, Heywood, Ryckman, Moore, A Fahner W Fahner Baynham Wuerth, England and others The school team played matches against neighbouring schools

Exeter entered a team in the Cyclone League in 1940 41 and 42 but the league ceased to operate after the 1942 season until 1947 because of the war The Lucan Irish won the League Championship in 1940, 1941 and 1942 The Cyclone League revived in 1947 with B W Tuckey as President There were teams from Hensall Zurich Lucan, Dashwood Grand Bend and Exeter Exeter's entry was managed by "Hap" Wells. The team went on to win the League Championship This was the first time in the history of the League that Exeter won The team members included Andy Bierling (goal) Gerry Smith (goal), Wes Ryckman, Doug Fletcher, H Brintnell Doug Brintnell Tim Stire George Shaw Reg McDonald Don Brintnell D Preszcator, Graham Mason Ross Tuckey and others The play-off games that year drew 800 to 900 spectators The star player of the post war Cyclone League team was undoubtedly George Shaw George had played in the 1936 Olympics with the Canadian team He had played on the wartime Intermediate A team which represented Exeter in the O H.A Intermediate A competition. That team was called the Exeter Fliers and they played against the Clinton Sparks, Seaforth Beavers and Goderich. The Exeter players were from R.C.A.F. station Centralia and included over the years in addition to George Shaw players such as Young, Wright, Webb, Allan, Bradley, Gunter, Graham, Forsyth, Wazorkie, Plummers, Brennan, Tait, O'Shea, Hurle and many others. This team provided top calibre hockey for Exeter during the later war years. In 1943 the team won the group and advanced in Intermediate play against the Windsor Colonials. The Fliers won the opening game 6 to 5 but lost the series. During the 1944 season the Fliers led by Shaw won the group championship and also the championship of Number One Training Command, defeating Brantford and Mountain View. The latter team had two National Hockey League players, Claude Bourque and Pat McCreary.

One of the biggest crowds in the history of the Exeter arena saw the Fliers defeat the army team from London. The 1200 fans had been promised that Syl Apps, the great Leaf star from Paris, Ontario would be playing for the army team, but Apps failed to appear. He did, however play for the army when the Fliers played a return match on March 20 in Stratford before 1700 spectators. Apps scored one goal and had three assists. George Shaw led the Fliers in their 10-6 victory with four goals. The army finally defeated the Fliers on March 27 with Apps leading the army to a 15-5 win. There is no question that the Fliers was one of the best teams to ever play regularly in Exeter.

Hockey was slow in developing after the war. In 1945 and 1946 there were Midget and Juvenile teams in the Ontario Minor Hockey Association. The Juveniles and Midgets were guided by Bunny Ford, Murray Moore, Bill Allison and Derry Boyle. The Times remarked that "Clarence will be a big help in guiding the boys". The Juvenile players included Watson, Southcott, Tuckey, Tieman, Hayter, Wilson, Musser, Ellis, Whyte, H. Brintnell, D. Brintnell, Hennessey, Haugh and Hannigan. The Midgets included Mickle, Hayter, Waghorn, Cann, Cudmore, Taylor, Parsons, K. Brintnell and M. Brintnell. The local group included Clinton, Goderich, Blyth and Exeter. This minor hockey program operated under the direction of Recreation Director Art Campbell and the Recreation Committee consisting of Bob Southcott, Frank Creech, C. V. Pickard, Ross Taylor, Bob Dinney and Irwin Ford. Ross Taylor managed the Midgets and Ed Hunter-Duvar the Juveniles. There were no championships won in these immediate post war years although many boys were given the opportunity to play hockey. The Juveniles had several noteworthy games in January 1946. A game against Blyth was "more fun than a Laurel and Hardy comedy" as the locals won 10-0. In a game on January 31, 1946 there was a melee on the ice when fans and players swarmed on the ice. The opposition was Goderich and the brawl started when Newcombe knocked Jim Hayter over. The arena operations in those days were directed by the arena committee headed by W. G. Medd and included J. M. Southcott, C. V. Pickard, E. M. Dignan, J. Witmer, E. R. Hopper, and A. O. Elliot. W. G. Medd served on the Arena Board from 1936 to 1939.

The Cyclone League revived in 1947 and Exeter finally won the championship in that year and again in 1949. George Shaw led the team in those days. He scored four goals in the championship game against Lucan which Exeter won 10-6. That game was played in January but the ice had thawed to the point where the skates were breaking into the sawdust making it more of a slush battle than a hockey game. The 1949 team included Gerry Smith, George Shaw, Wes Ryckman, Bill Musser, Gord Cann, Doug Brintnell, Tuckey, Penhale, and Mason as well as Art Whilsmith, Tim Sture, and Jerry Lawson. Ryckman was the captain.

Hockey and sports in Exeter generally owe a great deal to Derry Boyle who contributed more time and effort over the years to hockey and other sports than any other individual. He returned to Exeter from London after the war and helped with the minor hockey program in the late 1940's. In 1950 he handled the Intermediate team. That year was an unfortunate year for hockey in every way in Exeter. There was no ice until February 1 and the team fared poorly when it did play. In March, 1950 Derry wrote his "obituary to sport of all kinds forever" in his disgust and frustration. That obituary was fortunately premature since Derry Boyle has continued to provide leadership on the Exeter sport scene to this day.

In 1953 Boyle was convener of the Cyclone League even though he had resigned this job in anger after a verbal battle with Tory Gregg. The Cyclone League that year had the largest number of entries in its history. There were ten teams in the League. Exeter had high hopes for the championship. Artificial ice had been installed in the summer of 1952 at a cost of $60,000 despite the opposition of a number of ratepayers. Indeed, one ratepayer argued that "drains were more important than artificial ice" but Council went ahead with the project and in January 1953 Mayor W. G. Cochrane opened the arena with its new ice plant. A team of all-stars including George Shaw from the Cyclone League played Elmira. Elmira won the game. In addition, the official opening included a figure skating show. Ted Walper and the Exeter Brass Band provided the music. The Intermediate team however did not do well that year and finished in sixth place.

In 1956 the Exeter Intermediate team now known as the

Mohawks won the Intermediate "A" W.O.A.A. championship under "Red" Loader's direction. Bruce Biggart was the manager, and Lloyd Cushman the president. Council bought the players jackets and honoured the the first W.O.A.A. championsip team in Exeter since 1949. In the O.H.A. semi-finals the Exeter Mohawks were eliminated by Sundridge.

The stimulus provided by the successful 1956 season led the club directors to enter Exeter in Senior B hockey the next year. The Senior B league consisted of Wallaceburg, Strathroy, Woodstock, St. Thomas, Sarnia and Exeter. The players that year included Larry Heideman, Bill Oberle, Bill McDonald, Red Loader, Bill Wharmsby, Don Gravett, Junior Dares, Bill Franklin, Bill Hayward, Earl Berton, Doug Thiel, Jack Dwyer and Gar Baker. The experiment in Senior B hockey was not successful and in 1957 and 1958 Exeter returned to Intermediate ranks winning the Intermediate "B" W.O.A.A. Championship in 1959 losing only five out of thirty five games that year. The three top scorers in the League were Oberle, Gravett, and Loader. Also in 1959 Derry Boyle's Bantams won the W.O.A.A. Championship. Fred Lamb scored ten goals in the final game against Port Elgin which Exeter won 15 to 4.

The 1960's saw Exeter develop an expanded minor hockey program and attempt to continue Intermediate hockey. However little success was achieved by the Intermediate team and it was disbanded in the early 1960's. In addition to the good minor hockey program a town recreational league developed resulting in more people playing hockey in Exeter than ever before. A Junior team was developed which had reasonable success throughout the 1960's. In 1963 the Exeter Midgets were All Ontario finalists losing out to Huntsville. This Midget team was the closest Exeter had come to an All Ontario championship in hockey for many years. The players included Jack Glover, Mike Cushman, Gary Parsons, Callum McPhee, John Lock, Bob Burns, Allan Thompson, Tom Glavin, Peter De Vries, Larry Stire, Bob Storie, Bob McDonald, Ron Broderick, Larry Willert, Craig Davidson, Ron Cornish, Doug Parker, Don Wright, Brian Baynham and Larry Brintnell. Lloyd Cushman was the manager and Don Gravett was the coach.

In 1962 the Bantams won the W.O.A.A. Championship and the Pee Wees won the Shamrock championship. However, the important feature of the 1960's in hockey was the minor program developed by the recreation committee and the minor hockey association. Derry Boyle has been mentioned and the Times said "We shudder to think what Exeter would be like without Derry Boyle" but other men deserve recognition. L. Cushman, Don Gravett, Larry Heideman, Alvin Willert are some but Derry kept some kind of hockey going in the days before there was very much public support for the program Now the municipality and various organizations contribute funds and hockey is well supported

BASEBALL

Baseball was being played in Canada as early as the 1850's By the late 1860's and early 1870's baseball had caught on in Canada and was being played all over the country It is, of course, impossible to say when the game was first introduced in Exeter It is certain however that the game was being played in the 1870's It was popular in the village then and has remained popular ever since Indeed baseball is the only sport to have been played continuously in Exeter for the last one hundred years

In some places in the 1870's baseball was considered to be ungentlemanly It was said that "cricket is for elders, lacrosse for younger socialites, but baseball an imported game is just a sandlot sport usually played by undesirables " Right from the beginning baseball was known for its "mouthiness" Nevertheless, the game's popularity spread

In the 1870's Exeter teams played games against teams from Dashwood Brucefield London Lucan Crediton and other nearby points One of the first recorded games was played in Exeter on May 24 1876 between the Exeter North Stars and Dashwood The game was played on the sports field east of the Bible Christian Church As was common in those days the score was high with Exeter winning the contest 52 to 6 At the close of the game the clubs "adjourned to the Central", for some post-game conviviality Games were played on the cricket grounds during the next few years Exeter's team in the late 1870's was known as 'The Beavers' In 1877 the Beavers beat the Dashwood Stars 37 to 6 Some of the players of the early years were J Hyndman W Hyndman R Blake J Orr L Thorne H Elliott R Bissett C MacDonnall and J Gill

The sport continued to thrive in Exeter in the 1880's In 1884 the "Clear Grit Baseball Club" with such members as Richard Eacrett, William Sanders, F Elliott C Willis J Bawden, Frank Knight and Alf Drew had a successful year They defeated Clinton 13 to 7 London 26 to 3 and won first prize of $35 00 at a tournament in Ailsa Craig defeating St Marys Lucan and Forest The 'Clear Grits' published an open challenge in the papers offering to take on all comers Undoubtedly a little money would be involved in these challenge games

The Exeter "Actives" baseball club was organized in 1885 with George Moir as President Members of the club included John

McLaughlin, Peter Bawden, John Elliott, James Weekes, Alf Drew, Frank Kirk and James Pedre.

In 1886 the Club was organized as follows: President, D. Mills; Vice President, D. Davis; Treasurer, Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon; Secretary, J. Elliott; Captain C. B. Hoskin. Executive members F. Knight, W Andrews, James Weekes, C. Willis The team consisted of Elliott (pitcher), Hoskins (catcher), Weekes (first base), Eacrett (second base), Bissett (third base), McDonnell (short stop), Willis (right field), Tait (centre field), McLaughlin (left field). In early July this team lost a double-header to the Lucan "Irish Nine" 20 to 16, and 10 to 7 The Exeter "Times" suggested that "Lucan had eleven men with the extra two doing the greater part of the play," but the Times also was critical of the local boys. The Times' writer suggested that the boys were not interested enough to practice; they were "natural baseballists" but were too lazy. Perhaps the editor's comments spurred the boys on because in their next game they overwhelmed Mitchell 42 to 11. "The game was watched by a good crowd including many of the elite of the town."

Lockie Tait emerged in the late 1880's as Exeter's pitching star In a game in 1888 against Parkhill which Exeter won 24 to 13 Tait "made no less than 17 aggravate the atmosphere" The feature play of the game was a catch by Ike Carling in centre field Exeter played in the Huron Middlesex, Lambton League at that time

Tournaments for money prizes were big events in the 1880's The Exeter boys went to Seaforth on August 8, 1889 to seek the one hundred dollar prize money Our heroes lost all three of their games losing 19 to 14 to Brussels, 18 to 17 to Clinton and 25 to 21 to the London Travellers The Times felt that "the grounds were too small" allowing Brussels to get "some home runs over the fence" This was certainly not fair to our heroes Playing in Seaforth that day were Lockie Tait pitcher, Frank Anderson catcher Richard Eacrett second base McDonnell short stop Shipley first base Bissett, left field Collins third base, Gidley, right field George Anderson centre field The stars of the game were Lockie Tait and Frank Anderson George Anderson had come to Exeter in 1887 and provided leadership in organizing baseball during these years He was employed as a tinsmith by Hugh Spackman and later worked for B W F Beavers In another tournament in 1889 Exeter won the Huron County Championship and the $25.00 first prize by defeating Belgrave 14 to 6 Brussels 3 to 2 and Clinton 22 to 5

In a May 24 1890 Tournament in Exeter the local team won the $45.00 first prize, defeating St Marys and the Grand Trunk Railway team from London Tait and Dolan pitched, other players were R Eacrett F Anderson, G Anderson Hume, Bissett McDonnell, G Eacrett A long remembered catch by George

Anderson was a feature of the game. Following the games there was a farmers' foot race of a half mile. The race was won by H. Tindall who took home the prize which was a Verity plough. The ball throwing contest was won by C. McDonnell and the base running contest was won by Frank Anderson.

Pick up games were common during these years. Records exist of such spontaneous games as Married Men vs Bachelors, Tories vs Grits, the Band vs Unknowns. A game between the employed and the unemployed in 1894 resulted in an 8 to 6 win for the employed who had Hyndman pitching. The unemployed had an import who struck out many but the "sawed off catcher couldn't hold him." It would be interesting to know the line-ups for this game.

The late 1890's saw the games being played on the recreation grounds. The team in 1897 was called the Exeter Jubilee Stars and included Crocker, O'Neil, Spackman, Eacrett, Davidson, Stewart, Ford, Creech, Bissett. There was a decline in the calibre of ball in Exeter in the late 1890's. Indeed, there was nothing to rival the great ball played by Tait, the Andersons and the others of the 1880's until the years immediately prior to the Great War.

The Exeter Baseball Team of 1909

In the years 1910-1914 the stars to emerge were Tom Carling and Frank Boyle. Carling was a pitcher and played well enough to

be offered a spot with the Brantford Professional Team but "Good Old Tom Carling" chose to remain in Exeter. Frank Boyle sometimes was the catcher and sometimes the second baseman. In addition Boyle was a leader in organizing sports in Exeter from these years to his premature death at the age of 49 in 1936. Other players included S. Bowden, Hoskins, Bellwood, Steer, J. Bawden, Mallott, Elliott, A. Fahner, Mitchell, Heywood.

The pitching of Carling was the feature of baseball in Exeter until the spring of 1913 when he moved to Brighton. There were large crowds in attendance at ball games in Exeter in those days. Four hundred watched on June 29 1911 when Carling out pitched "King" Fahner as Exeter downed their arch rivals Crediton 7 to 6. "King" Fahner, reported the Times, "had a disconcerting smile but it did not stay with him throughout the game as it usually does". During the 1911-1912 seasons the "strong battery" of Boyle and Carling led the team. On September 5, 1912 Carling threw a no-hit no-run game against Clinton. Exeter scored one run to win 1 to 0 in a game played in one hour and ten minutes. Reid pitched for Clinton in the game which "fast rivalled professional ball". The Exeter line-up had R. Fahner, catcher; Boyle, first base; H. Fahner, second base; Mitchell, third base; Fisher, short stop; Elliott, centre field; Bellwood, right field; Heywood, left field.

That was one of Carling's last efforts in Exeter but fortunately for the baseball enthusiasts a new pitcher moved to town in early 1913 to take up the place vacated by "Old Tom". M. Harrington, a banker, proved that he could "handle the pill with seemingly little exertion".

Baseball continued to flourish in 1913 and 1914 with a very active town league convened by Frank Boyle and with Exeter playing in the South Huron Baseball League. The Town League was a church league with James Street Methodist, Main Street Methodist, Caven Presbyterian and Trivitt Memorial. The latter two clubs had to amalgamate because of a shortage of players. Frank Boyle was League President; W. Murray, Vice President; J. M. Southcott, Secretary; W. J. Heaman, Treasurer, and W. S. Cole, official scorer. The 1913 season was officially opened with appropriate remarks by the Rev. Mr. McAllister. Among the players involved on the various teams were Rivers, Treble, Boyle, Creech, Windsor for James Street; Statham, McTaggart, Hall, Heywood for Main Street, and R. Bissett, H. Bissett, Senior, Dyer, Hurdon for the Trivitt Caven Combines. Heywood pitching for James Street won the opening game over Main Street 11 to 9.

Exeter's entry in the South Huron League was a strong team with Boyle catching another great pitcher in the person of M. Harrington. The infield consisted of F. Triebner at first base, either

Boyle or F. Cann at second base, R. Bissett at third base and Dr. Campbell at short stop. E. Windsor, B. Rivers, J. Chittick covered the outfield. The team was smartly turned out in cream uniforms with blue trim, blue hats and socks.

The Exeter Junior Baseball Team of 1911. Front: R. Bissett, H. Finke and H. Sweet. Middle: C. Heywood, S. Fisher, B. Birney and H. Parsons. Back: Preszcator, Mellett and Hoskins. Extreme back: B. Burke.

Exeter lost only one game in 1914 as Harrington led the team both from the mound and at the plate. He hit .333 and pitched outstanding games such as a 7 to 0 no-hitter over Centralia. In other games he struck out 15 as Exeter defeated Fullarton 4 to 0; he fanned 15 in an Exeter victory over Crediton. With such a season it was apparent that the South Huron League Championship should have gone to Exeter but Ailsa Craig defeated Exeter in the Championship game to win the Spalding Cup.

1914 saw the end of Exeter's second great baseball era as War came and as the Bank of Commerce transferred Harrington.

After the war and throughout the 1920's Frank "Derry" Boyle kept baseball alive and well in Exeter as he guided an expanded Town League which included the Exeter Churches as well as the Centralia Methodists, Dashwood and Crediton. There was the annual Intermediate entry in the South Huron League and a Junior team entered as well. Frank Boyle was the driving force behind both of these teams.

In 1926 Exeter won the South Huron League pennant winning 10 and losing only 2. The team that year consisted of such players as

Medd, Hind, Beavers, Lawson, Tieman, Anderson, Dignan, Taylor, Yule. In 1929 Exeter entered the Western Ontario Baseball Association with London, Strathroy, and Sarnia. Players included Medd, centre field; Cantelon, short stop; Gascho, first base; Morrison, catcher; Beavers, left field; Gettler, second base; Rannie, third base; Hind, left field; and Lawson, pitcher.

The Huron-Perth Baseball League was formed in the early 1930's with Clinton, Mitchell, Goderich, Zurich, Seaforth, Exeter, Hensall, Dashwood, Blyth, Crediton and Lucan entering teams from time to time. The League was operating with 5 teams in 1939. In that year the Creech boys, Frank and Joe along with Eugene Beavers, A. Fraser and various other players formed an Exeter entry. The 1940 Hensall entry in the Huron Perth won the Ontario Baseball Association Intermediate Championship on October 3, defeating Toronto Columbus Grads 12 to 9 in the third game of the series

In 1947 the Huron Perth League carried on its second post war season in fine style with ten teams Reeve Tuckey threw the first pitch to C V Pickard "who connected for a clean single over second" The members of the 1947 team were G Robinson, Gerry Smith, Joe Creech who hit 360 Gord Farrow who hit 380 Art Campbell, Art Cann Hennessey and Harold Holtzmann who led the team in hitting with a 412 average, Howard Holtzmann Dinney Moore Harvey Penhale and Brintnell This team was eliminated by St Marys

In 1948 Elmer Bell was President of the Huron Perth Baseball League Exeter had entries in Intermediate Bantam Midget and Juvenile Baseball, in addition to both boys and girls softball teams

The Huron Perth entry in 1949 and 1950 made a dismal showing Bob Russell made his Intermediate debut in 1949 at the age of fifteen and Fred Darling was a bright spot hitting 387 but the team finished last in both years 1951, however saw a fourth place finish in the ten team league and a victory in the play offs to bring the Huron-Perth Championship to Exeter The team was eliminated in the Ontario Baseball Association playoffs against Listowel Boyle's Bantams won the Bantam Championship of Western Ontario but lost to Simcoe in the Provincial semi-finals Bill Pollen Terry Wade, Richard McFalls Don Wells Irwin Ford, Jim Russell, Bev Heywood Pete Cowen Chuck Parsons Bob Taylor and Don Taylor were the players

The Town continued to have good success in baseball throughout the early 1950's winning the Midget B Bantam B W O A A Championships in 1952

In 1953 the Intermediate team won the Huron Perth Championship but lost to Durham in the Ontario Baseball Association Elson Harold Holtzmann Fred Darling Mehaug Howard Holtzmann, Smith, L. Haugh, S. and J. Mitro were the team members. Darling led again in hitting with a .345 average. The team repeated their victory in Huron Perth play in 1954 and finished second in 1955. Loader hit .397 to lead the team in 1955. That same year the Bantams had an undefeated season to win the Western Ontario Championship under Alvin Willert's coaching but the team was eliminated from Provincial play because Jim McDonald had lost his Proof of Age. The Times Advocate was very critical saying that "sport has been run in a haphazard fashion for several years," the editor criticized the "rule dodging" and careless direction of sport. That small error probably deprived Exeter of a Provincial Baseball Championship. Most of the boys however did play on a Provincial Championship team the following year. In 1956 Gravett and Willert directed the Midgets to the town's very first Ontario Baseball Championship. "A clutch victory over Caledonia in the final game" gave Exeter the Championship. Jim Russell and Fred Hunter pitched. B. Glover, C. Blommaert, D. Kelson, D. Sillery, Jim Hennessey, Jim McDonald, A. Jackson and A. Rundle were members of the team.

Exeter continued to enter a team in the Huron-Perth League until the mid-1960's with the 1962 and 1963 years being the last years in which the team performed well. In 1962 the team won the Huron-Perth eliminating Listowel in a hard fought series. Embarrassment followed however, in the Ontario Baseball Association as the team lost to Campbellville 5 to 0 and 18 to 0 in one of the worst beatings the Exeter Intermediate team suffered in some years. Campbellville however had an exceptionally outstanding Intermediate team. Among the leading hitters on the team were Wright with .380, Johnson .368, Bogart .357, Wooden .465, Strang .345, Russell .291. Other players included Little, MacNaughton, Boyle, Taylor, Pfaff, McFalls, Nagle, Boyne, McKinnon, Horton, Kyle and Carey. The same team did reasonably well in 1963 winning the Huron Perth but losing to Petrolia in the Provincial play offs.

Baseball gradually diminished in the next few years with the last part of the 1960's seeing softball dominating the local ball park. The early 1970's have seen some effort in the revival of baseball. As with hockey credit must go to various individuals for carrying on the sport of baseball over some of the lean periods. Names like Willert, Boyle, Gravett, Fairbairn, and others deserve recognition.

BASKETBALL

In the year 1891, a Canadian, Dr. James Naismith from Almonte, Ontario developed a new game while teaching at Springfield, Mass. He named the game basketball since it consisted of throwing a round football through half bushel peach baskets

The game spread to Canada in the 1890's reaching Exeter in 1899. In that year "the citizens of Exeter responded largely to the invitation of Principal Boyd to attend the basketball game at the school grounds." For the first time basketball was played in Exeter and the Times found it to be a "quite unique and interesting" game. As the band played the villagers watched Miss Nettie Walters, Miss Robinson, Miss L. Hooper, Miss E. Gill and other young ladies in their long skirts and bloomers run up and down the grounds trying to get the ball into baskets fixed to poles.

It was to be 38 years before the next game of basketball was played in Exeter. This time it was played in the gym at the arena in December, 1937 and again it was a school activity. The Exeter team had been formed by Mr. A. Fawcett, one of the teachers in the local school, and the Times Advocate said that Fawcett was to be "commended for his work in instructing the high school boys in the game". Joe Creech, Ray Creech, Ray Waghorn, Les Coates, Bob Dinney, Murray Moore, Max Harness and Ted Buswell "made a very creditable showing against a much more experienced and larger St. Marys team which won 32 to 19.

Most basketball since 1937 has been played at the high school first in the arena gymnasium and then in the new district school gym after 1950 and presently in the new large gymnasium at the enlarged school. There was, however, a brief period during which Exeter shone brightly in Ontario Basketball Association play. The first entry was an Intermediate team in 1947 with H. Davis, D. Davies, J. Rether, A. Campbell, G. Rether, B. Davis, S. Green, G. Robertson, H. Hannigan, R. Nicol, J. Hennessey.

In 1950 a Junior Basketball team, The Maroons, playing in the arena gym brought Exeter its first and only All Ontario Basketball Championship. The players raised money to buy uniforms and equipment, they worked hard under Gord Farrow's coaching. The dedication paid off with a 116 to 57 victory over Brampton in the 2 game series. "The championship was the climax to an impressive string of victories." The players were John Rether, Murray May, Bill O'Brien, Fred Dobbs, Uel Schroeder, G. Cann, R. Vandenbussche, George Dobbs, G. Schroeder. The champions were honoured at a banquet presented by the Kinsmen Club. John Metras was the guest speaker. The team operated for the next year or two but the difficulties involved in playing in the arena gym where spectators could not be accommodated were too great to overcome. Without fans paying an admission fee there was no money and without funds the team was unable to carry on. Apparently arrangements could not be made to use the gym in the new high school so the team folded. It was unfortunate that junior and intermediate basketball could not have been carried on in Exeter.

especially after it had such an auspicious beginning

Basketball continued to be played at the high school with both boys and girls teams having a significant measure of success from 1947 to the early 1960 s Space hardly permits a detailed recounting of the history of high school sport consequently only a brief mention is made of high school basketball The local school placed teams in the WOSSA finals frequently during this period In 1949 the boys lost by 2 points to Tillsonburg in the WOSSA final the girls had lost in 1948 in the final In 1950 however, both the senior boys coached by Glen Mickle and the senior girls coached by Lanietta Siegner won WOSSA championships

Throughout the early 1950 s South Huron teams won various WOSSA championships The senior girls' team won 23 games in a row in 1952 53 winning the WOSSA championship both years In the midst of several years of highly successful basketball teams at the school the Times Advocate editorially told the high school to stop playing basketball It was detrimental to hockey! The school has continued to play basketball In 1955 all four teams junior and senior boys and girls won championships South Huron teams continued to be successful until the 1960 s For example in 1962, the junior girls lost only one game all year , the WOSSA final

CRICKET

This very English game was naturally enough played in Exeter in the very early years. The Cricket Grounds were located east of the James Street Church on property owned by Snell The first record of an organized club dates from 1874 although it would be a safe assumption to suggest that the sport was played in the village in the years before that In 1874 however a club organized E W Strathy was President and W Bissett Treasurer W Hodgson was Vice President The Players in 1874 included A MacDonnell H White R Bissett A Sheere, H Adams, M C Moscrys R Adams, T Horn T Treble G Elliott The Exeter club played St Marys in their first match in 1874 winning 110 to 108 with Moscrys making 50 runs The Times admired the "agile movements of the cricketers as they deftly wield with willow"

The game was played over the next 25 years with Exeter teams playing matches against various London teams including the famous "Pickwicks" and teams from neighbouring towns such as Clinton In August 1889 Exeter defeated Clinton 106 to 69 The Times remarked that "the Clinton team appeared to be afraid of the Exeter bowlers' fierce balls" The players in 1889 included J R Carling W E Harding F Elliott Begg Manson H K Hyndman Goodman and Ed Bissett J Elliott and C MacDonnell

During the 1890 s the club continued to exist, Dr Lutz served as President The old grounds continued to be used with a rental being paid to the owner Mr Snell There is little evidence to indicate that the game was played in Exeter after the turn of the century Other sports became increasingly popular

LACROSSE

The National Game of Canada was played in Exeter during the last 25 years of the 19th century and the first few years of the 20th century In 1886 the Lacrosse Club s executive consisted of Dr Rollins (President) N Dyer-Hurdon (Vice President) A Snell (Captain) B S O Neill (Secretary Treasurer) D Hooper P Bawden J Fairbairn H Samwell In some years the Exeter team was entered in a league for example, in 1897 Exeter Clinton Goderich Wingham Lucknow and Kincardine formed a league In 1899 a junior team known as the Exeter Nationals had a very successful year losing only one game Fred Bissett M Vincent, Senior and Poplestone were some of the players in the 1890 s Pick up games in the village were often very rough In 1897 the Grits and Tories played to a 4 - all tie in a very rough game Both F Bissett and M Vincent had severe injuries

The game was played on into the 20th century with the Club being called the "Victorias" W M Martin Rus Southcott Herb Ford Ike Bissett are cited as being among the stars of the early years of the century Leadership for the sport came from N Dyer Hurdon J G Stanbury R Knight Wm J Heaman J Davis Mac Vincent and others

The game gradually died out in Exeter and has not been played since the early years of the century

TENNIS

In the late 1890's and early 1900's a Tennis Club existed in Exeter The Rev Ten Eyck R C C Tremaine J G Stanbury W A Millyard G A Ferguson were some of the members For exercise the club members rode their bicycles to Hensall every Saturday afternoon The location of the tennis courts is not clear Some tennis was played sporadically during the first few decades of this century but the sport did not flourish in Exeter

BADMINTON

Badminton clubs have existed in Exeter from time to time since the 1930 s Audrey Pooley while living in Stratford won the Ontario Junior Badminton Championship and was runner up in the All Canadian tournament in 1955 In 1956 Bev Sturgis won the Senior W O S S A Championship There is little else of note as far as badminton is concerned It has been played in the arena gym and the high school gym over the years

CROQUET

This was a popular "sport" in the late 1800 s Challenge matches between Exeter and neighbouring towns were common. For example, in July, 1897 Exeter defeated Clinton 6 to 2 in a match played on Mr. Gidley's lawn.

CHECKERS

Inter-town matches were common in the 1890's. The great checker players of the 1890's were men such as Alf Walters, J. H. Hyndman, C. Prouty, J. Walters, R. Terry, T. Oke. Of course, almost everybody played checkers in various spots along Main Street. Alf Walters' store was a favourite spot, as was the old Carling store.

BILLIARDS

This "sport" did not have much success in Exeter until the late 1930's when pool tables were finally allowed in Exeter. As early as 1876 Council had refused permission to set up tables. Poolrooms, said the Times, were "loathesome" places and "a decided evil" which the village could do without. The village did not need the "damning influence of the billiard room" where "wives are forgotten and neglected, children are forsaken and parents despised for the ever clanging ball and cue." The Times felt that "we have at the present time evils sufficient to overcome without taking into the fold this, another giant of evil."

This was a reflection of Exeter's attitude to poolrooms over the years. Every time a request for permission to set up pool tables came before Council it was denied. The village was saved again in 1926 when the ratepayers voted no. The question of a poolroom had fallen "like a bomb" at a December, 1925 nomination meeting but Exeter was saved from sin again.

However, despite the protestations of the pious, Council, upon the advice of its solicitor, granted a licence for a poolroom in the late 1930's. The town has, however, survived this incursion of sin.

GOLF

In 1928 Earl Parsons laid out a golf course on the river lands north of the fair grounds. Only boys were allowed to play. The operation was short lived, possibly only one summer. Exeter golf enthusiasts during the next several decades played at Grand Bend until the two local courses were opened in recent years.

CURLING

The "roaring game" was undoubtedly introduced in Exeter during the time of the Bawden rink. The earliest note about curling occurred in 1906. In 1911 such men as W. W. Taman, G. E. Anderson, S. Sweet, J. H. Grieve, James Taylor, E. Jones and A. Taylor were among the curlers of the village. From 1912 to the 1920's the Dome Rink was the site of curling in Exeter and in the 1950's curling was revived in the arena. In 1960 the sport had become so popular that a curling rink was built. The sport is now a regular winter pastime for many local people.

VOLLEYBALL

This sport had a brief period as an organized community sport in the 1930's when Harry Lewis and S. B. Taylor formed a club in the arena gym. Almost all volleyball since then has been played as a high school sport.

LAWN BOWLING

The gentlemanly sport of bowling began in Exeter in May, 1904 when a Bowling Club was organized. The officers were as follows: Rev. Perkins, Honorary President; L. H. Dickson, President; B. S. O'Neil, Vice President; J. G. Stanbury, Secretary Treasurer; Rev. Martin, Chaplain; the Committee consisted of N. Dyer-Hurdon, J. Davis, A. W. Horne, R. B. Samuel, and W. J. Heaman. The club played on the Anglican Rectory lawn which by July, 1904 was reported to have been "in splendid condition". The first rinks from Exeter to enter the Western Ontario Lawn Bowling Tournament in London in these early years were those consisting of W. H. Leavitt, I. R. Carling, L. H. Dickson, W. J. Heaman (skip) and E. J. Christie, C. B. Snell, Rev. Collins and W. W. Taman (skip).

Exeter Bowling, 1914

In 1911 Lawn Bowling became a major sport in Exeter. In that year the present greens were opened and the first of the large annual invitational tournaments was held. The President of the 1911 club was W. J. Heaman. Other officers included W. D. Clarke, R. N. Creech, N. Dyer-Hurdon, Rev. D. W. Collins, J. G. Stanbury, I. R. Carling, J. A. Stewart, S. G. Bawden and W. W. Taman. Bawden donated a trophy in that year to be awarded annually to the winning rink in the Tournament. In that year of 1911 R. G. Seldon and W. W. Taman won the Ontario Doubles Championship at Hamilton.

In the years following large numbers of bowlers came to Exeter to take part in the annual tournament In 1912 over 200 bowlers came to Exeter in August for the three-day tournament The Advocate contained the following item

> "The green is in excellent condition and is decorated with flags and bunting A tent is on the ground and refreshments are provided Streamers decorate Main Street The town is alive with autos

The Bawden trophy was won that year by a Hensall rink and was in 1913 lost in the big fire which destroyed a good part of Hensall s Main Street The trophy was replaced and in 1913 was won by a Goderich rink Exeter enjoyed a great time each year when the Tournament was staged As one local poet put it in 1913

Hurrah! The Bowling Tournament
That great and looked for day
Has dawned and united brethren
Are lined on the green to play
That exciting game of Bowling
Bowling on the Green
No truer words were ever sung
Than that song Capt Hurdon sings

By 1917 Exeter was reputed to have the finest "green" in Western Ontario The great bowlers of the period included R G Seldon W W Taman J A Stewart W D Clarke C B Snell R N Creech N J Dore, T Elliott The "Big Four Rink" consisting of Seldon Clarke Taman Stewart won more tournaments than any other rink in Western Ontario Another successful rink consisted of R N Creech W E Sanders R W Fuke and W J Heaman The rink won the London Free Press Trophy in 1922 In 1917 a country woman criticized bowling She wrote

> Last week a report of the annual bowling tournament was given in your paper Several farmers have been commenting on these affairs and wondering how it is these men can see no better way to use their time than to bowl when men are needed to take off the crops I know instances where women are working indoors and out labouring beyond their strength at men's work If some of these bowlers would give their surplus time in the field instead of the women they would be doing more for their country than at present Why send to other places for farm helpers when there are so many sporting on the green in our own town? If farm labour is too much for their muscle perhaps they might come to the country in their motor cars in the evening and do some of the chores that fall to the women s lot in harvest time One would judge from the number of motors on Main Street during the tournament that this was the most prosperous time in our country s history We are told we must prepare for a crisis, must we meet it in motors?

The letter reflects the town country hostility which emerges from time to time

The Annual Exeter Tournament remained an important event through the 1920 s and 1930 s Bowling remained popular through the decades and in 1946 the club house was erected The sport still attracts many and summer evenings still see activity on the well kept green on Exeter's Main Street

TRACK AND FIELD

One can go back to Exeter's early days for examples of 'track events In the 1860 s and subsequent decades challenge foot races were common For example in 1878 James Oke and W Tait the hostler at the Central Hotel ran a race for a small bet from the Bible Christian Church to the Hotel Oke won and collected the bet T Oke and W Lyne ran 75 yards for $25 00 in 1886 the latter won In 1897 Will Folland beat Tom Oke for $25 00 and the racing championship of Exeter "Squire" Leathorn and Sam Stanlake ran 100 yard races for $5 00 in the 1890 s Leathorn usually won Such events provided amusement for the village and opportunities for small wagers

Real track and field activities, however did not occur until the high school staged field days and participated in Huron County Amateur Athletic Association meets which began in 1928 A recounting of the school track and field activities will be left to someone else A history of athletic activities at the high school is beyond the space of this book

Reference should be made however to Gordon Pirie s attempt in the mid 1950 s to break the three mile world record Pirie made this attempt on the high school track He failed to set a new mark but he did come close to the two mile record Recreation Director Doug Smith and Mayor Pooley were in charge of the arrangements and Ed Blake of C K N X radio was Master of Ceremonies

Races and similar events were held on holidays such as May 24 and Dominion Day Mention of these activities has been made elsewhere

QUOITS

This game was popular in Exeter during the 19th century and early 1900 s The game involved tossing a six to eight pound iron ring some eighteen yards The object was to have the ring drop on a peg placed in the ground or at least come close to the peg Groups representing sections of the village played games One such match occurred between "Market Square" and Andrew Street The latter team won 61 to 46 The players on the Andrew Street team were J Elliott, A Sheere C Snell F Collins the Market Square boys were J McLaughlin H Harding J Leavitt and A Dare

Inter-town competition developed as well and in August 1904 Exeter played Seaforth on the grounds opposite the flour mill Ed

Treble James Grieve, W J Bishop and T Boyle defeated Seaforth 114 to 92 A return match the following week was won by Seaforth 91 to 88

SHOOTING MATCHES AND HUNTING

Recreation and competition involving guns and shooting has been popular in Exeter from the very early days down to the present Of course, the game is virtually all gone now and hunting in the area now is, fortunately some would say a declining activity However, game remained fairly plentiful throughout the last decades of the 19th century and during the early years of the present century The following reflects the abundance of game in the past This account refers to the 1850 s and 1860 s

> "Occasionally a quail and her family were brought home from the forest placed in a wooden cage fed and cared for the housewife simply reaching in and taking out a fine bird when she desired to make a quail pie One or two wild turkeys were usually shot in the swamp each fall Wild geese were more easily procured Although there were wild ducks people seldom bothered with these tame ones being plentiful everywhere There were also many beautiful pheasants in the woods but these were seldom shot
>
> Many black squirrels were secured in the autumn and one of these prepared as one prepares chicken with dressing and roasted, made a fine dish Black bears and deer were numerous in the forests.

In the 1870 s and 1880 s great flocks of geese, ducks, plover, partridge quail and woodcock were reported. Deer was plentiful For example in October, 1884 Wes Bissett and his brother shot three deer in the sand hills each weighing over two hundred pounds dressed In those years the deer season in Huron extended from October 1 to December 15 and the duck season from August 15 to January 1 The Lake Smith area and the Pinery area attracted Exeter hunters Indeed in the 1890 s the Lake Smith Shooting Club included several Exeterites Even the occasional bear could be seen as late as the 1880's. In October 1884 a bear was reported in Stephen Township one-half mile south of Exeter Naturally enough a hunt was organized to seek out the bear Indeed, any strange animal immediately resulted in someone wanting to shoot it This happened in June 1877 when Eli Snell came upon a weird creature in the "wilds of Stephen Township two miles west of Exeter Snell came upon the animal which had a five foot wing spread a head resembling a fox and a pouch at its side for carrying its young The animal flew away however before Snell could shoot it The incident was reported to the Times whose knowledgeable editor pronounced it to be a "Kalong which was reported to have a wing spread of five feet and was a native of Java It was not reported again so presumably hunters did not come across it again

By the 1920's people were concerned about the depletion of wild life and it was proposed that the one thousand acre block in Stephen Township between the 5th and 6th Concessions and Huron Street and the Lake Road become a game preserve. At the present time most of the species of wild life common to this area seventy or eighty years ago are now gone Little cover remains as agriculture becomes increasingly intensive It would seem sensible now that hunting no longer be permitted in the area

Shooting matches were a popular activity for hunters and for those who just liked to shoot guns Reports of these matches appeared from the 1870's on In 1877 two teams staged a match with the losers to buy an oyster supper at the Central Hotel The team consisting of A Sheere, A Bissett J Westcott John Heywood, James Oke John Marshall and Tom Snell had to buy the meal "prepared in the usual good style of the house" for John Woods, Tom Bissett John Sanders E Bissett S Fairbairn F W Simpson and A Lake In the match each man had ten pigeons, the rules called for an eight yard width and a twenty one yard rise

Individual shooting matches were common In 1887 for example, Tom Bissett took $39 00 from W E Sanders in two matches In the 1880's the Exeter Gun Club was established and competitions for medals were held A man would keep the medal if he won it three times In the 1890's such men as James Bissett, J Handford George Anderson N Dyer-Hurdon E Bissett F Collins and A Loadman held weekly shoots for medals The Exeter Gun Club existed until fairly recent years although its activities were considerably reduced from those of early years

FOOTBALL

Football (presumably soccer) was played in Exeter from the 1880's to the years just before World War One Games were infrequent in most years although in 1891 the club was quite active In one game against Brucefield the contest was tied one each but the Times reported sadly "Brucefield had better uniforms" In the 1890's the Exeter Beavers and the Francistown Corncobs played some gruelling matches The worst loss recorded came in 1888 when Seaforth defeated the hometown 7 to 0 The games were apparently played on the old race track grounds

Rugby football appeared in Exeter at the high school in the 1940's and has become a popular fall sport But as was noted previously no attempt will be made here to deal with high school sport Soccer has had little interest in Exeter during the past seventy years although some attempts to revive the sport have occurred at the school

HORSE RACING

This has been a popular sport in Exeter since the very early days. In the 1870's the Exeter Driving Park Association was promoting races in the Exeter Driving Park which had been developed on property bought from Eldred Drew in 1875. On June 30 and July 1, 1876 a large meet was held. There also had been a large fall meet on September 15 and 16, 1875. There were excursion trains into Exeter on both days that summer. The Association set one thousand dollars in prizes. There were 2500 persons in attendance, 400 sitting in the grandstand. The track was considered to be "one of the best half mile tracks in the province". There were some well known horsemen of the area with entries including C. Handford's "Lady Beacon", J. Rattenbury's "Brucefield Girl", MacDonald's "Matilda". There were running races and trotting races. Races were held in the Driving Park in the summer and fall throughout the 1870's. The location of this race course is uncertain but it seems to have been on the west side of the village.

Some of the famous horses owned in Exeter in the early years included Dr. Hutchinson's "Galt Reporter", Thomas Carling's "Electricity", William Hawkshaw's "Protection" and S. Grigg's "Bay Warrior". In addition to the regular race meets challenge races between local gentry were common. Frequently the streets were used for these races.

In January or February of 1897 the Exeter Turf Club leased twenty acres from Messrs Dow and Tannant for a race track and recreation grounds. This, of course, is the present track and fairgrounds area. The Exeter Turf Club staged important race meets for the next fifty years or more. During the 1940's men like Jack Morrissey, Tom Yearley, Frank Taylor, Preston Dearing, Garnet Flynn, Harry Beaver and others promoted the interests of the Turf Club. In 1946 eight thousand dollars was spent on the grounds. A new grandstand, band stand, horse barn, track and baseball diamond were built with this money, which came from the village, the Agricultural Society, the Lions Club and from public subscriptions. The 1946 meet was the first since 1941. Three thousand people saw Frank Taylor's Midnight Express driven by Tom Yearley finish in the money. Tom Yearley's Lee Gratton did not finish in the money that year but a few years later Yearley had a big winner in Argyle Gratton. Yearley lost another fine horse, Amber Gratton in the fire which destroyed the horse barn in the 1950's; five other horses also burned to death.

The local track still echoes with the pounding hooves of the pacers and trotters although the roar of the crowd is missing since all of the running there involves training only. Races have been very infrequent during the past fifteen years.

Other sports such as broomball, horseshoes, figure skating and recreational skating and bowling have involved many participants as have all the sports mentioned here. Sports in Exeter over the years have had periods of ups and downs. For most of its history organization of sport depended on individuals as we noted. In the 1940's however, Exeter appointed a Recreation Director. A teacher at the high school Art Campbell shared his time between the high school and the recreation activity of the town. Doug Smith was the first full time Recreation Director. He was followed by Larry Heideman, Don Gravett and Alvin Willert. The present arena is the sixth to serve the town and the only one to be operated by the Municipality. It has been managed by such men as Ralph Batten, Derry Boyle and Alvin Willert.

The guiding body for the recreational activities that are sponsored by the town is the Recreation Council or more properly termed R.A.P. Committee which administers the park facilities, arena, and recreation program. Sports and related activities, then, have been important social functions in Exeter since the beginning of the settlement and have involved people from all segments of the community.

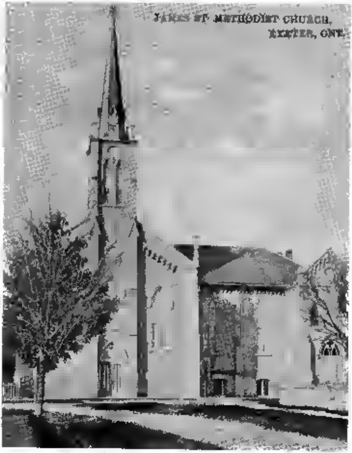
chapter 7

Churches

Over the years Exeter has had a very large representation of the various denominations of the Christian religion. The list includes the Church of England, Presbyterian, Methodist, Bible Christian, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Pentecostal, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist, Churches of Dutch origin, Mennonite, and others. Whether reports of Exeter's wickedness reached the various church leaders and missionaries 'as the roar of distant thunder' and thus caused such an influx of clergy and churches is not known. Perhaps the people of the area were more amenable than some to the ministrations of the clergy of a variety of churches. In any case it would be difficult to find a community of comparable size with the variety of churches to choose from.

Basically, however, the church history of Exeter is dominated by four denominations. The Bible Christian Society and the Methodist Church claimed the adherence of a majority of the local population; this is understandable since Devonshire was the birthplace of the Bible Christian movement and was also a strong Methodist area. Most of those who were not Bible Christians or Methodists were Anglicans or Presbyterians.

The Bible Christian Society had its origins in Devonshire in 1815. Its founder was William O. O'Brien, a Methodist preacher. In 1831 an act of parliament gave legal status to the society which became known as the Bible Christian Church. This church came to the Exeter area in 1852 when the first church was built at what was then known as Adams Settlement or Ebenezer. The site is marked by a cairn located one and one-quarter miles east of Exeter on Huron Street. Prior to the erection of this church the first Bible Christian services had been conducted by the Rev. Mr. R. Hurly in the home of Mr. James Pickard.



James Street Methodist Church about 1885

On February 24 1856 the first Bible Christian Church in Exeter was dedicated on the site now occupied by the Town of Exeter Clerk's office This building later became Farmer Brothers Liquor Store Among the first members of this church were James Pickard and his wife Richard and Ann Welsh James and Fannie Bissett Richard and Dorothy Handlord Robert and Margaret Frayne Henry and Elizabeth Westcott and John and Ann Jones The first minister to serve the church was John Edwards a very godly man whose knees it was reported were callous from much praying After he retired Edwards remained in the community staying in the May home south of the village Included in the Exeter circuit at this time were Bethesda Providence Eden Bethel Centralia Crediton and Dashwood Edwards had two assistants to help him serve this circuit these junior ministers were J. Webster and J Tucker The parsonage stood on Huron Street and was occupied in recent years by Mr and Mrs Waghorn It was torn down a few years ago and may have been the second oldest house in the town at the time of its demolition

In 1862 the present Exeter United Church was erected as a Bible Christian Church James Pickard's generosity was primarily responsible for the church since he personally guaranteed the cost of the building and provided a home free of charge for the junior ministers By the 1860 s the Exeter circuit had grown to twelve preaching places A large number of clergymen served the circuit, some of the more notable being the Rev G. Webber and Dr Pascoe

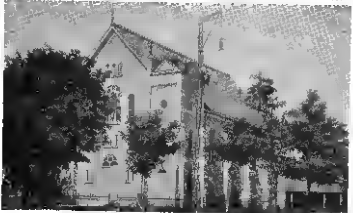
In 1884 the Methodist Church came into existence in Canada as a result of a union of various Methodist bodies including the Wesleyan Methodist and the Bible Christian Church In Exeter ninety four members of the congregation supported the union and nineteen opposed the move It was reported that some of the dissenters left the church and joined the Salvation Army Exeter then had two Methodist churches and when the Main Street Methodist Church burned in 1895 an attempt was made to unite the two congregations The effort was unsuccessful but apparently a number of Main Street people who opposed rebuilding did join the James Street congregation at the time In 1886 the parsonage on Albert Street was completed but in recent years this house was sold and a new church house erected

The Main Street congregation did eventually merge with the James Street congregation and the Main Street Church was sold to the Pentecostal Church This new congregation is officially known as the Exeter United Church and is Exeter s largest church The United Church building has thus gone through several denominational phases beginning as a Bible Christian Church

becoming a Methodist Church, then the James Street United Church and now the Exeter United Church.

The first Wesleyan Methodist Church was built in the 1850's on a site overlooking the river on Church Street. The church was located immediately west of the Elliott home on the higher ground. The minister at the time of the church's construction was the Rev. William Chapman. The Exeter congregation from 1844 to 1863 was part of the Devonshire circuit which included the area between Lucan and Clinton. After 1863 the Exeter circuit included Exeter, Fairfield, Lucan, Atkinson's, Farmsville, Lamport's and other points. As with the Bible Christian circuit there were a very large number of preachers serving the circuit over the years.

In 1869 the Methodists built a new church on the site of the present Pentecostal Church. Unfortunately this structure burned to the ground in March, 1895. The minister at the time was the Rev. H. W. Locke whose eloquence from the pulpit was widely appreciated and was reflected in the growing congregation. Considerable discussion followed the fire regarding a union with the James Street congregation. The Main Street people proposed a union conditional upon the construction of a new church "to be built within one year on a central location between the present sites." The James Street Board felt that the immediate erection of a new church would require "the sacrifice of too much of the material resources and moral influences of the two churches." The James Street Board proposed an amalgamation of the two congregations and the use of the James Street Church. The Board further proposed that consideration be given in the future to the construction of a



Main Street Methodist Church about 1900

new church. This proposal was completely rejected by the Main Street congregation who began immediately to plan for the rebuilding of the church. The church was rebuilt and served the congregation during the remaining Methodist years and during the years as Main Street United Church. Union of the two United churches resulted in the eventual sale of the church to the Pentecostal people of Exeter.

Both Bible Christian and Methodist clergy appeared very early in Exeter's history, however it is probable that the first clergyman who "ever preached a sermon in this locality" was the Rev. H. C. Cooper the first Church of England priest to work in the Exeter area. Evidently Cooper held services in Stephen Township's first school which was on Lot 15 on the London Road. The services held there would be part of the Church's attempt to bring the benefits of religion to the area when it was still very primitive. A priest like Cooper would serve a large area. In Cooper's case he served the area from Exeter to Clinton during the 1840's. Cooper's services in the Stephen school were the first Anglican services in the vicinity of Exeter. Cooper undoubtedly conducted many of the marriage services in the area because of the special legal status of the Church of England. Among other early priests in the area were Archibald Lampman, the father of the poet and Edward Sullivan.

After 1859 the history of the Church of England in Exeter became continuous. On April 26, 1859 the first vestry meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Rev. Stearne Tighe. The meeting was held in the Exeter Union School on Andrew Street. Anglican services were held in the school and in the Orange Hall until 1861 when the first Anglican Church was opened for services. The Church was known as Christ Church and was located on Victoria Street near the house presently owned by P. F. H. Connon. The rectory was on the north-east corner of Victoria and William. The prominent laymen involved with the establishment of the church in Exeter were Dr. Hyndman, Will Case, George Case, Joseph Acheson and Henry Macklin.

By 1864 the Church was still unfinished and still not paid for and on March 28, Thomas Trivitt was given authority to notify "The defaulters in payment of their subscriptions towards the funds for finishing the church that the money was required immediately." Also in 1864 some attempt was made to secure ground for a cemetery. In that year Exeter's pioneer James Willis died; he had requested that he be buried in consecrated ground but was interred in the secular cemetery. It would appear that there never was a parish cemetery in Exeter.

By 1869 average attendance at services was one hundred and eighteen. The church property by this time included the church, rectory, shed and stable. Throughout the 1870's the parish was plagued by financial difficulties. Isaac Carling, B. V. Elliott and the Cases led the parish in improving the financial situation. Among the clergy during the years were George Keys, Francis Ryan and Isaac Barr. These clergy served St. Pauls Hensall and St. Patricks, Saintsbury as well as Exeter.

In 1885 S. J. Robinson arrived as rector; he reported that "the church house, fence and other property were in a wretched state of repair. A rotting wooden fence enclosed a wilderness of weeds and undergrowth." The Sunday School with seventeen pupils and three teachers was the only organization in the parish." Parish finances were poor. Despite the poor finances plans for a new church were started in 1887. The new church was built and on the Third Sunday in Advent 1888 the last service was held in Christ Church. The rector recorded his impressions of the event.

> "In the evening many people sadly gathered up their books and said goodbye to the poor old walls that had sheltered them as worshippers for a quarter of a century. Monday the bell came down from the tower. It had tolled first for John Dew in the tower, it now left and performed the same office in its new home for his brother Alfred Dew in February 1889. Never handsome, never comfortable, never churchly in appearance yet still it was hallowed by the prayers of a generation. To what unworthy uses in a degenerate and irreverent age the old gallery and floors may be put one cannot conjecture. It never had a chancel and for this omission we thank God."

As the Rev. H. Seegmiller, whom we must acknowledge as the source of this history of the Church of England in Exeter, remarked, "one wonders what Robinson would have thought had he been aware of the use to which the building was put". For the old church was moved a short distance to the east and was used for almost fifty years as an exhibit building for the fair. It came to be called the "Crystal Palace". In 1934 it was purchased and torn down by Cliff Brintnell. So Trivitt Memorial Church replaced the old Christ Church.

> "For the beginning of this we must go back a few years to the appointment of S. F. Robinson who came right out of Huron College to the parish at the age of 31 years. A warm friendship grew up between he and Trivitt who was then over 70 years of age. Mr. Trivitt was a medium sized man who had inherited an ample fortune which he looked after carefully by sound investments and simple personal habits. Evidently he had three main interests — birds, flowers and theology. An aviary filled with rare birds showed his taste for ornithology. His extensive greenhouse kept his friends well supplied with flowers. He was a scholarly man, well read theologically, and he held very decided opinions on both politics and religion. Robinson, the new clergyman, held the view that "the people of Canada need only to be shown what the Church of England is, to make a wonderful

revival". With this Thomas Trivitt agreed. This probably explains why Trivitt Memorial was built on such a grandiose scale.

Thomas Trivitt

Trivitt was born in Taunton, Deane, Somerset, England in 1813. He married, in 1848, a lady from Norfolk County and the same year emigrated to Upper Canada where he settled on the present site of Centralia. Becoming the first Clerk of the Township of Stephen, he held that office for several years. In 1852, when the Fifth Division Court for the County of Huron was organized at Centralia, he became its Clerk. The Court was later moved to Exeter but he retained the post. In 1857 he was named a Justice of the Peace. Through his enterprise and liberality in connection with the building of the London, Huron and Bruce Division of the Great Western Railway, many permanent advantages were secured for Centralia which became a village in 1868

Although Robinson makes the idea of a new church in Exeter sound like his idea, it must have been discussed at some length before any official announcement was made

After the Good Friday service of 1887 Robinson informs us he met with the Wardens Donovan and Spackman in the latter's office There he outlined the idea for a new church, "the plan being proposed by the Rector and warmly seconded by the Wardens" Mr Donovan mentioned the subject to Mrs Trivitt and "that faithful friend of the church in the parish enlisted the sympathy of her husband A firm and definite plan was soon arranged by which Mr Trivitt offered to become the donor of a new church in Exeter On the 5th of May Bishop Baldwin was at Trivitt's home and gave his consent to the plan

At a Vestry Meeting called for the 9th of May Robinson as Chairman read the following handsome offer which Trivitt himself had written Thomas Trivitt Esquire, proposes to the Churchwardens and congregation of Christ Church, Exeter and to the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Huron that he will erect on the Hamlin Lot Main Street to be deeded to the said Incorporated Synod a substantial and commodious new church at the minimum cost of at least $5,000 any outlay beyond this amount to be entirely at his own option The size and style of architecture to be decided upon by a building committee composed of the Bishop the Incumbent, the two Churchwardens, and the Donor assisted by the advice of competent architects, as well as of the congregation occasionally called together by vestry meetings for that purpose (the said Churchwardens and congregation undertaking to provide the said site, properly drained and prepared for building and also everything necessarily required within said church when built, such as heating, lighting, seating, etc., together with the appropriate church organ) when being guaranteed the following conditions viz: — First, that the said Church for all time be called and known as "The Trivitt Memorial Church" — and second that the Donor be allowed to have permanently placed within said Church as soon as consecrated, and at any spot he may choose, either a window or mural tablet with this inscription, or its equivalent, viz:

> This Church was erected by Thomas and Elizabeth Trivitt as a grateful memorial of the many Divine favours conferred upon them, and was consecrated for the worship and service of God by the Right Rev'd Maurice Scollard Baldwin, D.D., Lord Bishop of Huron, on the   day of   A.D. 188-."

To this was attached in the Bishop's own handwriting these words: —

> "May 5th, 1887 — I heartily approve of the above and trust that God's blessing may rest upon the undertaking."

A resolution sponsored by A. A. C. Denoven and B. S. O'Neil was passed unanimously by those attending the meeting. It said

> that we, having heard Mr. Trivitt's proposition to erect a church on the Hamlin lot, Main Street, Exeter, do hereby heartily approve of and accept the same and we also do hereby guarantee that all the conditions shall be fully carried out in every particular.

A second resolution proposed by R. V. Elliott and George Kemp also passed without dissent

> that we present our hearty thanks to Mr. Trivitt for his very generous offer to erect a new church and that we will do our utmost to carry to completion the said church in a manner worthy of so munificent a donation.

The Wardens were empowered to begin negotiations for the site of the new building. The meeting closed with the singing of the Doxology led by Mrs. Kemp and by prayers by the Rector.

The Wardens were successful in obtaining from Thomas Hamlin two lots, each 50 feet wide north of Gidley Street. An Exeter man, Welsh, was given the contract for draining and excavating the land. On this property a street 50 feet wide was opened between Main and Andrew Streets. The Wardens were to interview the Town Council to see if that body would be willing to accept "Baldwin Street" and keep it in repair.

On April 2nd, 1888 the church people at the annual meeting agreed that "this parish from Exeter 1888 be known as "The Parish of the Trivitt Memorial Church"."

The cornerstone was laid by Bishop Baldwin on the 1st of August 1887 according to the service appointed by the Provincial Synod. Mr. Trivitt read an address to the bishop and handed him an engraved trowel with which his Lordship "well and truly in the name of the Eternal Trinity laid the foundation stone" Those present included Archdeacon Marsh of London The Reverend Messrs Craig of Clinton (The Rural Dean), Downie of Lucan Magahy of Seaforth Kai of Mitchell Thomas of Ailsa Craig Bridgeman of Hensall Freeman of London (the Curate of the Cathedral) Dr Rollins who represented the Town Council and the ministers of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches The choir was accompanied by an orchestra conducted by Mr Samuel Gidley In the cornerstone were placed papers, coins etc Also enclosed were papers prepared by Trivitt Elliott and W J Carling The collection from the "immense crowd" Robinson noted was $74 To conclude the day the visiting clergy were entertained by the Rector "at his residence"

The plans for the church were drawn up at a cost of more than $1500 by the firm of Peter Jones and McBride of London and are a replica of a portion of Exeter Cathedral The contract for the brickwork was awarded to Howard Dyer Evans and Heeman Nobbs of London did the cut stone work and W H Reynolds of Hensall was responsible for the woodwork Painting, slating and everything else was the work of the London firm

The building of the church was under the architect s supervision It is a fine specimen of early Gothic architecture, consisting of a nave transepts, chancel and tower — all substantially built of local white brick Ohio sandstone trimmings are liberally used throughout and every opportunity of creating a massive and solid effect was utilized The bosses, finials of the towers and some portions of the belt courses and the five Ionian crosses which finish each gable are beautifully carved The northern entrance is by a handsome open porch while the main entrance on the western side of the tower is through a double arch of lofty height and beautifully moulded Each arch is supported on a pair of New Brunswick granite pillars with carved capitals

Inside the walls are sand finished and painted The woodwork is of white pine, stained an oak shade. The interior dimensions are nave 79 by 38 feet chancel 25 feet square; transepts each 25 by 14 feet The seating accommodation is 600 and with extra seats 1000

The tower is solid and massive 17 feet square outside, not including the buttresses It rises to a height of 92 feet A spiral oak staircase in the turret in the southeast angle leads from the vestibule to the first floor From here to the top of the tower is reached by a well-built staircase The belfrey was specially built to hold a set of chimes

The chancel rises three steps above the floor of the nave and contains the organ loft on the north side The ceiling of the chancel was panelled in squares painted blue with gold stars and forming a groined arch over the organ loft The door to the east of the organ loft leads to the crypt or basement where the coal cellars and gas-lighting machines used to be A temporary Vestry was placed under the organ loft

Trivitt Memorial Church was opened on the 23rd of December 1888 one week after the closing services in Christ Church The bell, "in its new home" rang for the first time that morning at 7 30 to call the people to the first service — Holy Communion, at 8:00 o'clock.

The largest number of Communicants, sixty-one, in the history of the Parish were present. During the balance of the day three more services were held. At each of them Bishop Baldwin preached to congregations overflowing the seats, 650 at eleven o'clock, 850 at a Confirmation service in the afternoon, and 1200 in the evening — a total of 2700 persons. The offering, Robinson pointed out was $350.

A Vestry meeting was called for February 15, 1888, at which the church furnishings committee reported on their activities and considered with the people "the means to be adopted for raising the funds necessary to discharge the liability incurred for ... the seating, lighting, 'warming', and otherwise furnishing the church". Application was made to the Synod Office for permission to sell the old church property. A committee consisting of Spackman, Archer, Mill, E. H. Fish, and N. D. Hurdon was to solicit funds with which to meet the indebtedness. The stipend was raised to $800 per annum. Mr. Lambrook, the Sexton, was to receive $125 a year.

On May 10th the debts were: Hong, $209; Reynolds, $324; Lambrook, $20; Byrne, $125; Hamlin, $208 (on a note held by him); other notes in the hands of a Mr. Bell totalled $1100 and a Mr. Whitcock for $1400. With the addition of a bill for $10 for gasoline, and a few other outstanding debts the total owed by the parish was $3782. Against this were promises of $460 which would reduce the indebtedness to $3322. This was not to mention the $100 owed on the matting "for which the 'Busy Bees' are working" or the $874 still owing on the organ "which debt is being provided for by the Ladies Guild".

In October 1889 one of the Minutes of the Meeting stated that the members present "heartily sympathize with Mr. Trivitt in the trials he is at present enduring for the Church's sake and we trust that he may be spared to surmount them all and complete the work by Divine Providence allotted to him to fulfill". The "trials" were in connection with a lawsuit brought against him by Nobbs, the stone mason. No more information is available but it may be that the difficulty concerned the tower which it is thought, was not finished at the same time as the rest of the building.

But Trivitt was not yet finished with his generosity to the parish. At a special meeting on the 17th of February, 1890 the Rector announced that Mr. Trivitt had offered to provide $2000 for a Rectory, $2000 for a school house (Parish Hall), and a Vestry, $2000 for the purchase and installation of a Peal of Bells, and $6000 which, at his death, was to be used as an Endowment Fund. In consideration of this the Synod agreed to pay him 6% interest on $4000 of this latter amount during his lifetime. Further, the congregation was to apply the proceeds of the sale of the old Rectory and grounds against the cost of the new one, including the furnace. It was Trivitt's wish that the new buildings conform as nearly as possible with the architectural style of the church. To these things the Vestry Meeting agreed and the Rector, Wardens, and R. H. Collins presented the proposals to the Executive Committee of the Diocese for their approval.

The first child baptized in Trivitt Memorial Church was Frederick John, son of the late Samuel Littlejohn. Mary Anne Clarke and James Flynn were first to be married within its walls. The first funeral service was conducted for Alfred Dew.

The church was consecrated by Bishop Baldwin on the 31st of December, 1889. There was "the usual trouble about seats" (whatever that was!), Robinson reported in his summary of the year's activities. There was, as well, "an unusual one regarding the organist. This last trouble was settled by Mrs. Trivitt with a large personal outlay for the cause of Christian peace — we deem it thus an ungodly and mischief making woman caused the trouble and a pious and peace-loving woman settled it."

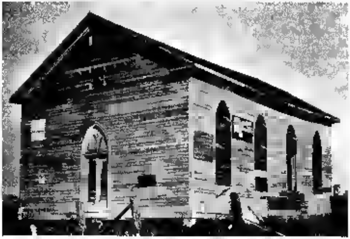
Trivitt Memorial Church about 1893

We have no way of knowing whether this difficulty whatever it was contributed to Mrs Trivitt's sudden death on December 23 1889 which incidentally occurred exactly a year to the day after the church was opened. Robinson called her "the lady bountiful of Exeter for many years." He continued "With sad hearts we laid her to rest beneath the chancel on the last day of the year." (The same day as the consecration of the church.) "The stone vault may hold the lady till Jesus comes but the life upon earth by its example is existing still. O the dreary future without her. She gave of her means she laboured for the church a noble woman a faithful wife while she lived we felt that sainthood was a reality Bishop Baldwin gave the funeral address to a congregation that filled the seats and the aisles

Anticipating a few years, we find that her husband joined her in 1894 He died on the 18th of July at the age of 82 and was buried beside his wife in a vault under the chancel of the church This service was conducted by Bishop Baldwin, assisted by Robinson (who had moved in the meantime), Shore of Lucan and the Rector E. W Hunt Brass plates on the floor now mark their place of burial

The church has continued to serve the parish There have been many problems for the parish in maintaining such a large and imposing church but somehow the Anglicans of Exeter have continued to meet the costs of so doing A comment is perhaps needed to explain the greater detail given about Trivitt as opposed to the other churches The explanation is simply that the author used the history of the church done by Dr H Seegmiller a former rector No such detailed history exists for the other churches and the author was unable to meet the deadline for publication and also do the necessary research on the other churches

The first Presbyterian congregation was organized in Exeter in 1861 by the Rev. John Logie. The nearest Presbyterian church to



The First Presbyterian Church in Exeter This Church also served as a Roman Catholic Church for a time

the Exeter area was the Rodgerville congregation and the distance and poor roads dissuaded the Presbyterians from Exeter from attempting the trip very often The first services were held in Francistown in a store near the corner Services were held here until 1863 when a church was built on the north side of the river on the west

side of Main Street. The indebtedness incurred by the erection of the church was wiped out by 1867.

The first minister, John Logie, had come to Canada from Scotland and served in a number of localities in Southwestern Ontario. He remained in Exeter until 1875.

In 1876 the present structure was built under the leadership of the Rev. A. Y. Hartley. The church was named Caven Presbyterian Church after the Rev. Dr. William Caven, then Principal of Knox College. By 1883 the church had about 75 members from 35 families.

In 1883 the Rev. W. M. Martin arrived from Norwich. The church was now a separate charge. In 1885 the Manse was built.

In April, 1893 a windstorm blew the roof and tower off the church but the small congregation struggled to rebuild the church in its present form.

The Rev. Martin remained in Exeter for 26 years. His family included his son William Melville Martin who eventually became Premier of Saskatchewan and later Chief Justice of that province. Martin was succeeded by the Rev. S. F. Sharp who died suddenly just before services in April, 1918. Since 1918 nine ministers have served the congregation which has grown to over one hundred families.

The original Presbyterian church was acquired by the Roman Catholic church in May of 1878. The number of Catholic families in the village was small but nevertheless the church was purchased and on Sunday July 21, 1878 "the opening and dedicating services were held." The building was well filled. "A large number were from the parish of Offa, while a considerable sprinkling of the congregation was composed of Protestants of Exeter." The services were conducted by Rev. Father Kilroy from Stratford and Rev. Father Brennan. In his sermon Father Kilroy thanked the "Protestants for their subscriptions toward the church and assured them he would pray that they would be able to see the true religion of Jesus Christ."

The history of the Roman Catholic Church in Exeter is quite vague. The Catholic community in the village was small and the church was probably closed a very few years after its opening. The Roman Catholics of Exeter were members of the parish to the south of the town and have remained so to the present.

"The Grand Salvation Army
will
Open Fire on Exeter
on
Saturday, June 7, 1884
Heavy Firing

will be heard
Blood and Fire Brigade
under orders

With this advertisement the Salvation Army made its first impact on Exeter The army contingent came from St Marys under Captain Barley The Army was active in Exeter for the next several years They drew large crowds of "country folk" to their services for a while with their 'God glorifying and Devil defeating services' where the rules prohibited chewing tobacco, laughing or talking

The Army was not popular in Exeter, however During their parades and services its members were pelted with apples and other items On one occasion one of the "soldiers" was 'hit hard on the head while praying" Boys "kicked up a racket' during services and on October 30, 1884 the soldiers were pelted with snowballs But as the Times remarked 'the valiant warriors loved persecution so the boys were trying to make them happy'

In October, 1885 one letter to the Times complained as follows

> "For over a year now the S A has had undisputed sway in Exeter During that time almost every night has witnessed their parade, with drums beating flag flaunting and a most discordant sound which in their enthusiasm they call singing Numberless horses have been frightened by that drum and flag and numerous serious accidents have been narrowly escaped Some day when some terrible or fatal accident occurs as a result the people will wake up to the fact that the methods of worship adopted by the Army are an unmitigated nuisance During these dark nights when people are driving on the streets there is a great deal of positive danger But the army appears to have no respect for anybody's rights or privileges but their own"

The Army stayed on nevertheless staging "grand real fights with the Devil", the Hallelujah Guards singing songs of Victory and generally attacking satan and sin Their vehemence finally led Council to forbid the Army from beating their drums and singing in the streets Said the Times 'the noise of the Army has been a disgrace to the place ever since they came here" In July, 1886 a fight between one of the soldiers and a young Sanders lad resulted in the soldier being felled by a blow to the temple with a large stone wielded by Sanders By October 1888 the Army had 20 adherents in the village There are few records available but the Army may have owned the building on James Street which had served as the old fire hall and jail During the 1880's and 1890's they met here or in one of the halls above various stores The Army disappeared in the village for a number of years after the 1890's but reappeared again briefly in the 1920's

The only other church that existed in Exeter in the 19th century

seems to have been a small Baptist congregation which was in existence in the 1880s There are very few references to this group and a Baptist church did not exist in the town until very recent years The Pentecostal organization appeared in the 1930s when the Pentecostal Mizpah Theatre made periodic appearances in the village Pentecostal tent meetings with their "Red Hot Evangelism" were held in Exeter during the early 1940s and in 1947 a Pentecostal church was established The congregation grew to the point where it was able to purchase the old Main Street Methodist Church a few years ago

With the post war Dutch migration to the South Huron area churches of Dutch origin were established in the community Since these are of fairly recent origin no history will be given for these churches or for the small Seventh Day Adventist congregation which has existed for several decades in Exeter

The central place of the church in the social life of the community continued throughout the nineteenth century and for the first half of the twentieth century During these decades virtually everyone in the community was closely associated with one of the churches As we noted in previous chapters social and recreational activities were organized and sponsored by the churches so that people not only worshipped in the churches but also spent a good deal of their free time in church organized activities However the churches no longer occupy the primary place in the social and recreational life of the community Dwindling congregations and changing social patterns have resulted in a diminishing influence on the part of the various churches on the lives of the people not only in Exeter but throughout the country

chapter 8

Schools

"Far too many youngsters are loafing about this town who should be in school. The village is breeding tramps and criminals for every idle boy or girl is a potential scoundrel."
(The Exeter Times)

"The ideal of greatness and magnitude in the history of the world has existed with the people of Exeter in the railroad and in the new school building ... The school is truly ... the best schoolhouse in the country."

This item from the Times was referring to the school that was built on Victoria Street west of the present elementary school in 1875. A description of this school written by George Fenwick is given below.

> "Our antipathy was aroused because we were being prepared to resume our studies at school. But previous to our actual entrance Billy Thomas and I had gone on a quiet scouting trip to the brick school house, the purpose of which was to see how the land lay, figuring, of course, on the possibility of occasionally sneaking out on truancy expeditions that we might get longer breaths of fresh air for our lungs

> and more freedom for our legs and to get away from the grind of the school room. But after looking over the proposition we came to the conclusion that things did not look very promising. For the school grounds were entirely enclosed with a six or seven foot board fence divided in the centre for the boys and girls play ground. We also observed that the windows of Mr. Gregory the headmaster looked out upon the only entrance to and from the grounds. We concluded that this added a double hazard to the possibility of our making a getaway. Later we learned this to be a fact when we saw with our own eyes the sternness of his features and with what persistency he hung about the entrance to the schoolhouse during the recess period always grasping in his hand a vicious looking strap in which he took a too great delight in wrapping about the shoulders and legs of any pupil guilty of the least infraction of the school rules.

M. M. Rosebrugh was the first principal of this school but he resigned shortly after the school was opened to enter into a partnership with Mr. Vandusen in a drugstore. This school which served Exeter for 75 years was erected to replace the old school house which had been located on an acre of land on the east side of Andrew Street just north of Victoria Street. The old Andrew Street school had three rooms and must have been opened in the late 1850's or the early 1860's. In addition a junior room was held in a house where Miss Elston taught.

The first school in Exeter was S.S. 5 Usborne and was located in Francistown. It had been opened in the late 1830's and was also the first school in Usborne Township. The first teacher in this school was "Thomas Taylor, an Englishman whose education and ability left nothing to be desired. He was a man of scholarly appearance, middle-aged and a bachelor. . . . Taylor took up his residence in the log school house". Eventually Taylor assumed in addition to his duties as schoolmaster the work of Township Clerk of Usborne. "After some years when Thomas Taylor was considered by many a very efficient fixture in the community, his pupils arrived one morning and found an empty school house. Everything was in perfect order that morning. . . . There was no sign of a struggle, no sign of foul play, nor had there been anything in Taylor's manner the day before to indicate that anything out of the ordinary was about to happen". And nothing ever was found to indicate what had happened. No one had encountered him on the road. There was no evidence that he had been killed and no indication that he had committed suicide. He simply vanished without a trace.

In any case, these little school houses, S.S. 5 Usborne, Stephen No. 9 and the Andrew Street school house served the educational needs of the village until the new school was opened in 1875. The last principal in the Andrew Street school and the first principal

in the new school was Mr. Rosebrugh. The trustees of the old school house during its last years were James Pickard, William Sanders, J. W. Broderick, David Johns, Isaac Whitlock and John McDonnell. These men were also the first trustees of the new school.

One of the first problems faced by the Board of Trustees in the new school arose when one of the teachers, Miss Logie, caused a considerable furor in the village. The Times reported that Miss Logie "instead of using entreaty and persuasion . . . has been using a large stick, in the one end of which was fixed a nail driven through the stick, sharpened at both ends and protruding at either side. With this instrument the scholars were punished repeatedly by this innovator of school rule". Miss Logie was reprimanded and allowed to continue her duties on probation but without her instrument of persuasion. The Board also faced complaints that it was not keeping the public informed of its action. In 1875 the Board spent the "enormous sum of $9000" and "the parties who pay the piper" were expressing in the columns of the Times dissatisfaction with the Board's failure to provide the public with all the financial facts.

No secondary level of education was provided in Exeter during these early years. Seaforth and Clinton had collegiates and those Exeter scholars who wished to continue their education beyond the entrance year had to attend school in either Seaforth or Clinton. By the mid-1880's there was a growing feeling that high school education should be provided in Exeter. In 1888 the Times pointed out that Clinton, Seaforth, Goderich, Mitchell and Parkhill had high schools. The young people from Exeter who wanted to go to high school went to school in these towns "at great expense also at risk of injuring their morals". It was not until the late 1890's, however that any high school education was provided.

But the elementary education that was available was good according to the standards of the time. By 1878 Thomas Gregory was principal, his salary that year was $625. The staff included Miss J. A. Spitzer, Miss E. Hicks, Miss J. Butcher, Miss A. Henderson and Miss H. Shram.

These teachers' salaries ranged from $225 to $275 per year.

Gregory remained the principal until 1889. In 1888 he had been highly commended by the Advocate:

> "As a result of indefatigable industry and keenness of purpose Mr. Thomas Gregory, principal of Exeter Public School succeeded in establishing a record which has never been equalled in the annals of a public school teacher by passing fourteen pupils for entrance to high school . . . as a teacher Mr. Gregory is amiable and warmhearted and yet firm and resolute."

Despite this performance Mr. Gregory was dismissed as prin-

The Exeter Public School built 1875

cipal in 1889. The village was considerably stirred up over Gregory's dismissal and over the appointment of G. H. Tom as principal. There was opposition to Gregory's dismissal and there was great opposition to Tom's appointment. If a new principal was needed the feeling was that George Holman's application should have been accepted. As one ratepayer wrote

> "Phat is the trustees doin? Bedad, I think theyre makin fools of thim selves Hirin a boy for $600 when they could git plenty of good min at $500. Sure every spalpeen of a scholar in town knows that their fathers and mothers aint satisfied ... Ive nothin agin the boy. Hes a dacent boy enough

Another letter said

> "I must protest against the recent action of the trustees in securing the services of Mr. G. Tom as principal of our school. Not that I have the slightest objection to Mr. Tom in his proper place

Tom did not remain principal for long in Exeter. By the early 1890's T. A. Brown was the principal. Mr. Brown resigned in 1894 and Mr. Lockhart became headmaster. In that year Exeter public school had 405 pupils. In addition to the principal who taught the 38 pupils in the senior fifth class, there were five other teachers.

Miss Gregory had fifty six pupils in the senior third year. Miss Waldrond had seventy one pupils in the senior second. Miss Pringle had seventy one pupils also in a senior second class. Mr. R. Ferguson had seventy-five pupils in his class. Miss Clara Vosper taught the senior fourth which had thirty-seven pupils. Miss Vosper continued to teach in the Exeter Public School until January 23 1919 when she resigned after thirty six years in Exeter. Before that she had taught four years in Winchelsea. Miss Vosper died at the

Miss Pringle's Room, Exeter Public School 1894
Top row: Tom Harris, Annie Jones, Annie McAnsh, Ada Hedden, Jessie Gould, Flossie Preszcator, Myrtle Taylor, Della Treble. 2nd row: Mabel Newton, Myrle Gould, Ethel Armstrong, Nina Carling, Georgie Hyndman, Vere Snell, Louise Carling, Harold Bissett, Merv Hueston, T Smale, Roy Leathorn. 3rd row: Billy Toll, Gernel Heywood, Grover Bissett, Earl Browning, Wes Snell, Jennie Quance, Lottie Elliott, Melv Southcott. 4th row: Bert Piper, Frank Howard, Shirley Bobier, Art Wood, Bill Bowey, Eldred Elliott, Leslie Preszcator, Ira Taylor, Bertie Marten. 5th row: Edna Dow, Iva Box, Olive Piler, Hazel Dignen, Olive Quance, Ethel Elliott, E. Brooks, Winnie Carling, George Armstrong. 6th row: May Snell, Flossie Taylor, Ruby Treble, Ruth Rollins, Mary Parsons, Vellie Handford, May Wood, B. Muir, Joe Vosper. 7th row: Edna Follick, Ethel Cobbledick, Vera Cobbledick, Elsie Sutton, Ethel Piper, M Newton, Jessie Matheson, Bertha Snell, Charlie Dyer. Bottom: Ed Vosper, H Howard, E Smale, J Elliott, Bert Muir, J Howard, Tom Carling, E. Horn

age of ninety two in January 1951. A plaque commemorating her service to the Exeter Public School hangs in the present school building.

By the turn of the century, S J A Boyd had succeeded Lockhart as principal. Also by this time the school had a High School Department. At this time pupils were able to do the work of the first three forms of high school in Exeter. This enabled them to complete the work necessary for the Junior Matriculation. Until about 1910 Ontario had a four year high school program. Forms I and II were called Lower School and Forms III and IV were termed

Upper School Completion of Form III gave the Junior Matriculation Pupils who wanted Form IV still had to leave Exeter to attend school elsewhere From about the time of World War One to 1921 Ontario had a six year high school but six years were never offered in Exeter Indeed, there was no Form IV until 1921 22 In 1921 the Ontario High School program was reduced to five years and in 1926 27 Exeter introduced the fifth year

Principal Boyd resigned in December 1901 he left Ontario for Hannah North Dakota where he took over the local newspaper The Hannah Moon Boyd was popular and must have had quite a sense of humour because in September 1901 he placed an advertisement in the Times which read

> "The young man who lost his handkerchief while stealing plums from Principal Boyd's orchard can have same by calling at Mr Boyd's residence

The teachers on Boyd's staff at the turn of the century included Misses Vosper Gill, Pringle, Waldrond Robertson and Ball The enrollment in 1901 was 363 Boyd was succeeded by Mr Anderson who remained for one year only leaving in June 1903, for a more lucrative position in business The Times commented that 'it is to be regretted that there are not better inducements in the profession to retain the ablest teachers

In 1904 commercial education was added to the High School Department when Mr W T O'Brien was secured as Commercial Master to teach shorthand typing bookkeeping law banking and penmanship O'Brien left Exeter shortly thereafter to open the O'Brien Business College in London. A Mr W J O'Brien operated the Exeter Commercial Night School during the early years of the century

It was the practice of the Board to advertise for students The advertisement shown below is from 1903

> "The Exeter Public School Board beg to announce that a limited number of seats in the High School Department are now available for the fall term application for which may be made to the secretary Mr Grigg No mistake will be made by parents in committing their children to the care of the staff The object of the Board is to have our town never less than foremost as the center of educational work

During the period 1910-20 the Exeter High School Department had several principals including W B Weidenhammer George Sparks, and W Eadie Some of the teachers during this period included Misses Lulu Edmonds, Estelle Craig, Campbell Viola Dobson and Quinn The Chairman of the Board at this time was S Martin The Secretary Treasurer was Miss Kate MacFaul

Space does not permit an exhaustive treatment of the history of

school activities over the years. There were many activities for example the High School Literary Society provided the community with a variety of entertainment. In 1910 the Society staged its programs in the Opera House with debates, chorus, music and drama. The Executive that year included W. Millyard, Lillie Robinson, Evelyn Gill, Herbert Gregory, Millie Martin, and Percy Hardy.

Then, as now, everyone was concerned with what should be taught in the High School. Teachers' Institutes debated such topics as "how to develop a taste for the beautiful?" Or "how can we secure independent work among our pupils?" A letter to the Advocate suggested that the school's job was to teach students to be clean, polite, respectful, obedient, truthful, diligent, honest, pure, moral, and manly. Teachers' salaries were constantly under consideration. In the early years of the century, for example, the following comment appeared:

> "Teachers' salaries were taken up by Miss Jean Murray of Exeter and Mr. Norman Geddes of Belgrave. They showed conclusively that teachers are inadequately paid, their work is the noblest, they are training young minds for eternity and yet they aren't paid as well as many uneducated persons who are in other walks of life. The teachers felt that the psychological moment had arrived to do something and those present decided that a minimum salary of $700 should be received by beginners. This should be increased by $50 a year until $900 is reached for the fifth year's salary."

The salary suggested does not seem excessive when the teacher was responsible for classes as large as seventy five. Supervising the work of the pupils, preparing their slates and exercise books and taking care of all of the other scholastic matters required considerable diligence. In addition, the lighting, heating and ventilation were the responsibility of the teacher as well as the care and maintenance of the outhouse. It was also recommended that the teacher examine the fingernails and teeth of her pupils each morning. If neglect was found, marks were to be deducted.

One of the institutions associated with Exeter's schools for many years was the Grigg store. J. M. Southcott described the store as follows:

> "The Grigg store was principally a book and stationery store and catered to the schools and pupils of the district.
>
> In those days each pupil was responsible for the purchase of all his school supplies. At the beginning of a new term the scholars would be presented with a list of the books and supplies that would be required.
>
> There was always a stampede to the Grigg store where the demands had been anticipated and they were ready to meet it. ... We would hazard a guess that with human nature what it is, and with Miss MacFaul's unalterable opinion that there were no bad children,

that everything that left the store was not paid for. Every child to Miss MacFaul was a dear or a darling.

If a family was in straightened circumstances Miss MacFaul never refused them credit. However, what the public did not know was that Miss MacFaul had the backing of the Board and where an account could not be collected the School Trustees paid it."

E. J. Wethey came to the High School Department as principal immediately after the First World War. He had served in the army as a sergeant-major. Wethey's early education was obtained in Cobourg. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Trinity in 1898 and a Masters Degree from the University of Toronto in 1910. He taught in various schools throughout Ontario including the Carleton Place High School where one of his pupils was Captain Roy Brown of the Royal Flying Corps. Brown was the World War One ace who shot down Baron Richtofven. Wethey served as principal in Carleton Place from 1911 to 1920 except for the war years. Wethey was a mathematics scholar of note at the University having won a Prince of Wales prize and a Wellington Scholarship.

Mr. Wethey came to Exeter then in 1920 at a salary of $2200. The High School Department had 116 pupils and 3 teachers H. M. Millar, Margaret Ross and Annie Dorrance. Wethey established a reputation as an excellent mathematics teacher. Over the years he also acquired the reputation of being a bit of a character. He served the school and the community well retiring as principal in 1942 being succeeded by

E. J. Wethey

Principal
Exeter High School
1920-1942

H. L. Sturgis. Wethey remained on staff as a mathematics teacher until 1944 when he retired after a total of 45 years in the teaching profession. He died in 1951 at the age of 74.

During his principalship Wethey initiated the Commencement Exercises. The first Commencement at the High School was held in January, 1922. A description of this Commencement is found below:

> "The first Commencement of the Exeter High School was held in the Opera House on Friday, January 13 with Mr. F. W. Gladman as chairman... The chief speaker of the evening was Col. Walter J. Brown of Western University and his address on 'Education For Citizenship' was interesting and instructive. The musical and literary numbers for the program were given by pupils as follows: piano duet Mabel Johns and Helen Dignan, recitation Verna Walker, violin solo Kenneth Stanbury, piano solo, Margaret Gladman.
>
> The presentation of certificates and diplomas were made by Mr. E. J. Wethey... Mr. W. G. Medd presented the following with scholarships: May Abbott, Marion Woods, Kenneth Stanbury, Margaret Wethey, Harry Grieb, Emalie Hogarth and J. Edgar Thompson.
>
> A gold medal was presented to Emalie Hogarth ... the valedictory was given by Emalie Hogarth."

At the time Wethey was appointed as principal of the High School Department the public school principal was G. S. Howard. Howard's staff included Misses Murray, Kinsman, Taylor and Medd.

The early 1920's saw a reorganization of the Board. The Public School Board was replaced by the Exeter Board of Education in 1921. The members of the first Board were F. W. Gladman, chairman, Canon A. A. Trumper, R. N. Creech, E. M. Dignan, J. G. Stanbury, J. S. Harvey and James Grieve. Miss MacFaul was Secretary. The Board began seriously considering improvements to the school in 1923. The public school had five rooms and a sixth room was urgently needed. An assembly hall was needed and above all it was felt that the time had come for "the abolition of that moral and physical abomination—the outdoor toilet. Our school needs the sanitary lavatory." In 1923 the High School had six rooms and in addition a science laboratory. Major improvements such as a gymnasium were considered to be necessary. The villagers however were not amenable to any large expenditures on the school. Throughout the 1920's various proposals for improving the school were considered and abandoned because of a lack of support. The basement of the library was used as a primary room because of the crowded conditions at the school but no additions were constructed and the school remained overcrowded.

It was not until 1939 that a new building was erected. In that year

Exeter High School Teachers 1825
Miss Bain Miss McKenzie Miss Hale Miss Ross

the central part of what is now the public school was built as an additional High School facility. The High School continued to use space in the old building as well as the new school

The next major change in Exeter's educational system came in 1946 when the Exeter High School Area was formed The new Board met in 1947 and consisted of Dr H H Cowen Chairman J H Jones, E L Mickle James McAllister, George Hess, A W Morgan Edward Chambers and E R Hopper R N Creech was Acting Secretary The former Exeter Board had purchased in 1946 an old R C A F building This building measured 24 feet by 35 feet and provided another classroom, this building came to be called the chicken coop" So the new Board inherited a High School consisting of four buildings viz the old school erected in 1875, the building erected in 1939, the arena gymnasium and the "chicken coop". Public School children used the old 1875 school with the primary room being held in the basement of the library Not only

were new elementary school facilities needed but a new area High School was obviously required but caution was the rule as the Times suggested:

> "No one need be either unduly alarmed or unduly elated as the county fathers have a way of proceeding cautiously for they are well aware that change is not necessarily progress. Let it never be forgotten that the little red school house has been for many a long day the nursing mother of the men who have made Canada great."

After several years of operating the Exeter school as described above the area high school board opened a new school in 1950. The cornerstone laying had taken place on June 8, 1949. Since then three additions have greatly enlarged the High School so that it can now accommodate comfortably about eleven hundred pupils. The Public School has also been enlarged several times with additions being made to the 1939 structure. In the 1960's a Separate School was built so that Exeter is now served by a modern Secondary school and two Elementary Schools.

The old school was demolished in 1950. As Tom Collingwood remarked "She was a hard old school to work with".

chapter 9

The Municipality and the Town Leaders

> *"Gentlemen, I congratulate you on your election to the honourable position of the governing body of the Village of Exeter and may our labours be crowned with harmony and good will."*
>
> *(W. D. Sanders, Reeve, January 1937)*

There have always been people in Exeter, as in every other municipality, who are willing to devote time and energy to provide the leadership for the municipality. Council, Cemetery Board, Public Utilities Commission, Board of Education, Board of Health, Library Board, Recreation Committee, Planning Board, and various other agencies require people to serve and fortunately there are always some people available to perform what B. W. Tuckey described as "thankless jobs". Twenty-five men have served as head of the municipality, twenty as Reeve of the Village, and five as Mayor of the Town of Exeter. Many, many others have served on the Council and on other boards.

In 1873, men like James Pickard, Isaac Carling, and William

Verity assumed the leadership roles. On January 28 1873, a formal petition from these men and others was presented to the Province of Ontario This petition asked that the unincorporated villages of Exeter and Francistown be incorporated as a separate Municipality On March 19 1873 the Legislature passed, for the third time Bill Number 148 and on March 29 1873 this Act was given royal assent and the Village of Exeter was incorporated The basic reasons for the wish of many inhabitants of the two villages of Exeter and Francistown to incorporate were firstly the combined populations of the two villages was about one thousand secondly the railway was coming and the people of the two villages had met in a public meeting and had directed that a bonus be granted to the railway by the village of Exeter if it was incorporated It is quite probable that an incorporated municipality would have been formed if the railway had not been built but incorporation would probably have been delayed The construction of the London Huron and Bruce Railway was the immediate and direct cause of the incorporation of the Village of Exeter

The Village was formed by taking the south half of Lot one, Concession One, Hay Township, the north half of Lot 20 Lots 21 to 25 inclusive in Concession One of Stephen Township and the north half of Lot 15 Lots 16 to 20 inclusive and the south half of Lot 21 in the First Concession of Usborne Township. The census of 1871 showed that the Usborne part contained 277 people the Stephen section 532 people and the Hay section 35 people In April, 1874 the Village and the three townships agreed on these figures, Hay 35 Usborne 280 and Stephen 600 The new village assumed one-twenty-fifth of Stephen s debt and one-twenty-seventh of Usborne s debt

Michael Eacrett

The new village under Returning Officer William Bayley acclaimed Isaac Carling as Reeve, and the following men as Councillors James Pickard William H Verity John Trick, Edward Drew The new council met on April 15 in the Orange Hall The oath of office was administered to the new council by Justice of the Peace Joseph Atkinson Joseph Acheson and George Kilpatrick were named assessors The first Treasurer appointed was Robert Sanders, C Senior was named Tax Collector and Michael Eacrett was the Clerk. Eacrett remained Clerk until August, 1898. Eacrett was born in Ballybritis, Ireland on August 12, 1837 and migrated with his parents to Hay Township. Eacrett travelled around the United States and then returned to Exeter in the period after the Civil War. He eventually became foreman of the paint department at the Verity works. When Verity moved to Brantford, Eacrett also moved. He worked until 1914 when he was forced to retire because of impaired sight. He returned to Exeter where he died in February, 1926.

The first By-law passed by the new council of the new village was enacted on April 28, 1873 and was a By-law to restrain "horses, sheep and other animals from running at large". The By-law prohibited horses, bulls, oxen, sheep, goats, pigs and geese from running at large. Cows were not prohibited and for decades cows at large remained a problem in the village. The fines provided in the By-law called for 25¢ per horse, bull, ox or pig, 12 and one-half cents per goat or sheep and 5¢ per goose.

In 1873 the auditors, John Ranton and John McDonnell reported the following:

Receipts	Licenses	$ 193.00
	Borrowing	500.00
	Fines	6.00
	Gov't School Grant	140.00
	Statute Labour	82.00
	Taxes	2942.53
Expenses	Local Purposes	$2007.48
	School Grant	961.10
	County	221.31
	Balance	$ 673.64

The tax rate for that first year of incorporation was 8 mills. The license income in 1873 came from tavern licenses, shop licenses, livery stable licenses and from one visiting side show. Among other items of business completed by that first council were appointments of various municipal officials. John Southcott was appointed poundkeeper; the pound charges per day in 1873 were for horses 75¢, for bulls, oxen, cows, heifers, steers 50¢, for pigs 50¢, sheep 25¢, geese 5¢. The fence viewers were George Muttart, Richard Gidley and Isaac Whitlock. William Sanders and John Gill were collectors of statute labour commutation. The Road Commissioner was George Hodgins. William Sanders was the issuer of licenses.

During the next two or three years the Councils appointed

various other important officials, such as, bell ringer R. Walsh at $30.00 per annum, north end pound keeper R. Thomson, assessor Sam Handford $30.00 per annum. In these early years Charles Senior received $30.00 as collector of taxes and M. Eacrett received $75.00 as clerk treasurer.

In 1888 the salaries paid to various municipal officials were clerk $120.00, treasurer $30.00, assessor $50.00, constable $325.00. Said the Times proudly, "This municipality will compare favourably with any with regard to low salaries." In 1887 the village's total expenditures were $6905.41 of which education used $2463 or about 40%.

The early councils met in various locations including the Orange Hall, the School House, and the Market House. Council did not have a permanent home until 1887 when the Town Hall was built. In 1886 the people had voted with a majority of 91 in the affirmative to have Council proceed with the erection of a town hall. It was constructed by Ross and Taylor for $3895. The interior was finished and the furnishings provided by S. Gidley. The total cost eventually reached $8000, including the cost of the land. The property was purchased from J. N. Howard after council had considered the corner where the library was built and the south-west corner of Main and Victoria Streets. The situation which finally brought about the erection of the town hall was the need for better court facilities. Ironically the court in recent years moved from the town hall because it was considered inadequate.

Construction of the town hall gave another boost to the village and prompted the Times to say "we want another railway, a high school, more manufacturing." The Times went on to say that "Exeter is known throughout the world and we think the Times is responsible." The talk of a railway was prompted by the possibility of a CPR line from St. Marys.

People were proud of the new town hall. It signified Exeter's growth and progress. The new town hall had a clock with wooden works, built by George Hess of Zurich in 1887. The clock was kept in running order by Thomas Fitton in the early years and continued to keep Exeter's citizens informed of the time until recent years. It is now in disrepair. In addition to the clock on the town hall there was a bell. The bell-ringing job eventually became associated with the administration of the town weigh scales and cattle yards located behind the hall. In 1901, for example, George Kemp first, and then James Dennis took the job for $40 per year. The bell was rung at 7 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m., 6 p.m. and for curfew if required. A curfew called for children fourteen and under to be off the streets by 9:30 p.m. In 1902 council rescinded the By-law because it was too difficult to enforce.

Nomination meetings took place in various places until the Town Hall was built. For example in 1878 at a nomination meeting held in the Market House nine men were nominated for council. This meeting produced various comments about Exeter emerging as a ' very smart village ' in five years. One unfortunate note was mentioned by Eldred Drew. He "deprecated the sectional feeling which seemed to pervade the two ends of the village. If such an unfortunate condition of affairs were allowed to continue we should soon find the village the loser. The only way to secure the lasting prospects of the village was by all working harmoniously together." This sectional feeling continued to exist between Exeter South and the North end for decades. Indeed, the feeling has not yet totally disappeared. The North end, or Francistown, seemed to be regarded as the less desirable area although it is difficult to be sure of the reasons for this.

Town Hall about 1890

Apparently there was something wrong with the 1878 election and a second nomination was held on Feb. 1, before the village had a government Second nominations occurred several times but there was always a willing group to serve as a council After the election in these early years the clerk would publicly announce the elected in the street

The clerks of the municipality provided continuity for the councils and over the years only six clerks have served the village and town Michael Eacrett was mentioned In August of 1898, George H Bissett assumed the duties of clerk he resigned in April 1905 and was succeeded by Joseph Senior who held the office until January 20 1911 when he was succeeded by T B Carling In May 1915 Senior resumed the duties of clerk and remained in office until August 14 1941 when he resigned after a total of thirty two years as clerk He had taken a leave of absence in 1936 for four months during which time Amelia Acheson acted as clerk Senior had worked for thirteen Reeves and was honoured at a banquet in October 1941 C V Pickard was chosen as clerk to succeed Senior Mr Pickard served for about 25 years and was succeeded by Eric Carscadden

The various other municipal offices such as assessor, collector and so on were held by many people over the years and no attempt will be made to record these office holders The heads of the councils are shown below and the councils for each year are also shown below

HEADS OF COUNCIL

Isaac Carling	1 year	1873
George Willis	2 years	1874-75
Wharton Hodgson	1 year	1876
Lancelot Hardy	9 years	1877-1885
J A Rollins	7 years	1886-1891, 1893
W Bawden	3 years	1894, 1896, 1910
T H McCallum	2 years	1895, 1909
A Q Bobier	4 years	1897, 1906 1908
T B Carling	2 years	1898, 1903
H Spackman	1 year	1899
W G Bissett	4 years	1900 1901, 1904, 1905
W H Levitt	1 year	1902
John W Taylor	4 years	1911, 1914, 1915, 1916
W J Heaman	2 years	1912, 1913
B W F Beavars	7 years	1917 1923
W D Sanders	8 years	1924-1927 1934 1937 1939
Chas B Snell	2 years	1928-1929
B M Francis	4 years	1930-1933
T Pryde	2 years	1935-1936

B W Tuckey	10 years	1940-1948, 1951 (mayor)
A J Sweitzer	2 years	1949-1950
W G Cochrane	3 years	1952-1954
R E Pooley	7 years	1955-1961
E Simmons	3 years	1962-1964
J H W Delbridge	10 years	1965-1974

COUNCILS OF EXETER 1873 - 1972

1873
Reeve —Isaac Carling
James Pickard
William H Verity
John Trick
Edward Drew

1874
Reeve —George Willis
W H Verity
J Trick
J Pickard
E. Drew

1875
Reeve —George Willis
W H Verity
E Drew
L. Hardy
J Pickard

1876
Reeve —Wharton Hodgson
W H Verity
L Hardy
E. Drew
J Pickard

1877
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W H Verity
John Sanders
R Bissett

1878
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
W H Verity
G Samwell
J N Howard
R Bissett

(Council resigned in January; second vote in February)

1879
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
J Sanders
R. Bissett
E. Drew

1880
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
J Ranton
E. Drew

(The St Marys Journal referred to one of these men as a walking whiskey barrel)

1881
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
W Bissett
E. Drew
J Pickard
W H Verity

1882
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
E. Drew
W Fenwick

1883
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
W Fenwick
A G Dyer

1884
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
A G Dyer
D Johns

1885
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
A G Dyer
D Johns

1886
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
D Johns
J Pickard
W Huskin

1887
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
D Johns
J Pickard
T B. Carling

1888
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
T B Carling
J Pickard
T H MecCallum

1889
Reeve —J A Rollins
J Pickard
W Bissett
T B Carling
T H MecCallum

1890
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
D A Ross
H Spackman
J Oke

1891
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
E. Christie
T B Carling
D A Ross

1892
Reeve —W Bawden
E. Christie
H Spackman
D Ross
T B. Carling

1893
Reeve —J A Rollins
H Spackman
T B. Carling
E. Christie
T B. MacCallum

1894
Reeve —W Bawden
W G Bissett
T B Carling
A Q Bohner
J W Taylor

1895
Reeve —T H MacCallum
T B Carling
J W Taylor
W Treble
W Herding
(MacCallum tied with Bawden
The Returning Officer voted
for MecCallum)

1896
Reeve —W Bawden
C. Snell
W Treble
T B. Carling
J Taylor

1897
Reeve —A Q Bohner
J W Taylor
C B Snell
J A Rollins
J Dauncey

1898
Reeve —T B Carling
W G Bissett
E Christie
W Harding
J Evans

1899
Reeve —H Spackman
J Evans
J Taylor
J Armstrong
J Muir

1900
Reeve —W G Bissett
W H Levitt
J Armstrong

J Muir
J Evans

1901

Reeve —W G Bissett
W H Levitt
J Muir
J Evans
I Armstrong

1902

Reeve —W H Levitt
W Harding
J Muir
J Wood
J Davis

1903

Reeve —T R Carling
J Cobbledick
J A Gillespie
T Hawkins
J T Manning

(Manning was absent for three months and then replaced by J Creech)

1904

Reeve —W G Bissett
J W Taylor
J Muir
I Armstrong
J Wood

1905

Reeve —W G Bissett
I Armstrong
W H Levitt
J Muir
J Wood

1906

Reeve —A Q Bobier
A. E. Fuke
W J Heaman
E. Treble
J Creech

1907

Reeve —A Q Bobier
A E Fuke
W J Heaman
J J Knight
W Johns

1908

Reeve —A. Q Bobier
J J Knight
W Johns
W J Heaman
A E Fuke

(Bobier defeated Rawden by 44 votes)

1909

Reeve —T H MacCallum
W Johns
W J Heaman
C. Luker
W J Carling

1910

Reeve —W Rawden
W J Heaman
C Luker
W H Levitt
W A Balkwill

(Rawden died in October and was replaced by J Taylor Luker moved from Exeter and was replaced by W W Walper)

1911

Reeve —J W Taylor
W H Levitt
W C Rivers
L Day
W W Walper

1912

Reeve —W J Heaman
W H Levitt
W Rivers
J H Scott
A Ford

1913

Reeve —W J Heaman
J H Scott
J Hind
J Doyle
T Harton

1914

Reeve —J W Taylor
J R Hind
T Harton
J Doyle
B W F Beavers

1915

Reeve —J W Taylor

G Roulston
B.W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton

1916
Reeve —J W Taylor
B W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton
G Roulston

(Beavers was Warden in 1916)

1917
Reeve —B W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton
L Day
C B Snell

1918
Reeve —B W F Beavers
L Day
J Elston
C.B Snell
W H Penhale

1919
Reeve —B W F Beavers
L. Day
J Elston
C B Snell
W H Penhale

1920
Reeve —B.W F Beavers
W Ward
J Elston
J Davis
W H Penhale

1921
Reeve —B.W F Beavers
J Davis
J Elston
W H Penhale
C B Snell

1922
Reeve —B W F Beavers
J Davis
F A Ellerington
C.F Hooper
B M Francis

1923
Same as above (B W F Beavers was Warden)

1924
Reeve —W D Sanders
J Davis
J M Southcott
C F Hooper
E. Coultis

1925
Reeve —W D Sanders
E Coultis
J Davis
C.F Hooper
J Hawkins

(Sanders defeated C B Snell by 15 votes)

1926
Reeve —W D Sanders
E. Coultis
J Davis
W Gillespie
J Hawkins

1927
Reeve —W D Sanders
E Coultis
E. Davis
W Gillespie
J Hawkins

1928
Reeve —C B Snell
H Bierling
B M Francis
E J Christie
H C Rivers

(Snell finally defeated W D Sanders after his fifth try)

1929
Reeve —C B Snell
H Bierling
E.J Christie
B.M Francis
H C Rivers

(Snell died in November and Francis was Acting Reeve. E. J Christie also died)

1930

Reeve —B M Francis
H Bierling
J Grieve
H Rivers
D Rowcliffe

1931

Reeve —B M Francis
Others same as 1930

1932

Reeve —B M Francis
J H Grieve
D Rowcliffe
S Ross
G Williams

(Francis defeated W D Sanders by 16 votes Williams died in September and was replaced by H Bierling)

1933

Reeve —B M Francis
H Bierling
J H Grieve
S Ross
D Rowcliffe

(Francis defeated W D Sanders by 15 votes)

1934

Reeve —W D Sanders
H Bierling
J H Grieve
D Rowcliffe
S Ross

(Sanders defeated Francis by 26 votes)

1935

Reeve —T Pryde
J W Hern
J W Morley
G F Roulston
H C Rivers

1936

Reeve —T Pryde
H T Rowe
J W Hern
E.M Dignan
J W Morley

(Rowe resigned and was replaced by W E Middleton)

1937

Reeve —W D Sanders
E.M Dignan
J Wellington Hern
F A May
H O Southcott

(Dignan and Hern were the only two nominated for council at the first nomination meeting so they were acclaimed to council. At a second nomination meeting on January 18, 4 were nominated with May and Southcott being elected)

1938

Reeve —W D Sanders
E.M Dignan
F A May
H O Southcott
B W Tuckey

1939

Reeve —W D Sanders
J W Hern
E.M Dignan
B W Tuckey
H O Southcott

1940

Reeve —B W Tuckey
E.M Dignan
H O Southcott
J W Hern
S B Taylor

(Tuckey defeated W D Sanders who wanted to be Warden)

1941

Reeve —B.W Tuckey
E.M. Dignan
J W Hern
H O Southcott
S B. Taylor

(All of the above were acclaimed)

1942

Reeve —B.W Tuckey
E M Dignan
J W Hern
H O Southcott
S B Taylor

(The 1941 Council was returned to office under the Wartime Provincial Extension Act)

1943

Reeve —B W Tuckey
A J Sweitzer
H Bierling
E.M Dignen
J W Hern

(Tuckey defeated W D Sanders and was appointed Warden of the County)

1944

Reeve —B W Tuckey
H Bierling
E M Dignan
J W Hern
A.J Sweitzer

1945

Same as 1944

1946

Reeve —B W Tuckey
E M Dignan
J W Hern
W C. Allison
J Caldwell

1947

Reeve —B W Tuckey
W.J Allison
W G Cochrane
A J Sweitzer
J Caldwell

(Caldwell had tied with R C Dinney This forced Clerk Pickard to cast the deciding vote Dinney indicated he wished the clerk to vote for Caldwell)

1948

Same as 1947

1949

Reeve —A J Sweitzer
E. Lindenfield
W Hern
D O Hughes
L. Snider

(Qualification was completed with one minute to spare.)

1950

Reeve —A J Sweitzer
H L Snider
E. Lindenfield
V Heywood
W Webster

THE FIRST TOWN COUNCIL

1951

Mayor —B Tuckey
Reeve —L. Snider
Deputy Reeve—W G Cochrane
E Beaver
R C Dinney
W Mackenzie
W Webster
A Snelgrove
R Campbell

(61% of the voters turned out at the polls Snider defeated Bierling by 52 votes Tuckey defeated Sweitzer by 205 votes Cochrane defeated V Heywood by 171 votes)

1952

Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R E Pooley
Deputy-Reeve—W Mackenzie
E Beaver
A Snelgrove
R Dinney
R Bailey
E Brady
E Witmer

(At this time former Mayor Tuckey said it was a "Good time to quit" it was a "thankless job")

1953

Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R E Pooley
Deputy-Reeve—W Mackenzie
R. Bailey
E Brady
R Dinney
R.D Jermyn
A Snelgrove
E Witmer

1954
Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R E Pooley
Deputy Reeve—W Mackenzie
E Brady
R Jermyn
A Snelgrove
R Bailey
R Dinney
E. Witmer

1955
Mayor —R E. Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy Reeve—C Mawhinney
R D Jermyn
E.W Brady
R. Taylor
R. Dinney
A Snelgrove
R Bailey

(2 nomination meetings were needed to fill council and there was a threat of a third)

1956
Mayor —R E. Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy Reeve—C Mawhinney
W Musser
G Fisher
R. Taylor
R Bailey
A Pym
R. Dinney

1957
Mayor —R E. Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy Reeve—C Mawhinney
W Musser
G Fisher
R Bailey
R. Taylor
A Pym
M Greene

1958
Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy Reeve—C. Mawhinney
C M Farrow
G Fisher
M Greene
R Taylor
R Bailey
W Musser

1959
Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy Reeve—C Mawhinney
E Simmons
M Greene
G Fisher
R Taylor
W Musser
G Rether

(Rether tied with Farrow but Rether won on the recount)

1960
Mayor —R E. Pooley
Reeve —C Mawhinney
Deputy Reeve—G Fisher
J Weber
G Rether
R Taylor
C. Farrow
M Greene
W Musser

(Only 23% of the voters turned out at the polls)

1961
Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy Reeve—G Fisher
J Delbridge
R Taylor
R Bailey
C Farrow
W Musser
E Simmons

1962
Mayor —E Simmons
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy Reeve—G Fisher
J Delbridge
J L Wooden
F Wright
C. Farrow
R Taylor
R Bailey

(Mackenzie had failed in his bid for Wardenship in 1956 by losing to Marrissey on the 4th ballot Mackenzie died in January 1962 and Fisher resigned as Deputy Reeve and was appointed Reeve. Farrow and Bailey both resigned as Councillors and allowed their names to stand for Deputy Reeve. Farrow was elected as Deputy-Reeve and Bailey was elected as Councillor again W Musser was elected to fill Farrow's post as Councillor)

1963 - 1964

Mayor —E Simmons
Reeve —G Fisher
Deputy Reeve—W Musser
J Delbridge
J L Wooden
F Wright
R Taylor
N Ferguson
R. Bailey

(This was the beginning of the two year terms In June Musser resigned and Bailey was elected Deputy Reeve C E Boyle filled the vacant Council seat)

1965 - 1966

Mayor —J Delbridge
Reeve —C E. Boyle
Deputy Reeve—R. Bailey
C V Barrett
M Cudmore
R. Taylor
J.L. Wooden
F Wright
P Gandon

(Gandon replaced R Bailey upon Bailey's death and D MacGregor took Gandon's place)

1967 - 1968

Mayor —J Delbridge
Reeve —C E. Boyle
Deputy-Reeve—M Cudmore
D MacGregor
J Newby
R. Taylor
G Vriese
J L Wooden
F Wright

1969 - 1970

Mayor —J Delbridge
Reeve —C E Boyle
Deputy Reeve—M Cudmore
R Dobson
(Mrs) H Jermyn
D MacGregor
T MacMillan
R Taylor
G Vriese

(G Vriese died in office Mrs Jermyn was the first and only woman ever to sit on Council)

1971 - 1972

Mayor —J Delbridge
Reeve —C E Boyle
Deputy Reeve—D MacGregor
M Cudmore
Mrs H Jermyn
T MacMillan
K Ottewell
B Shaw
R. Taylor

1973 - 1974

Mayor —J H W Delbridge
Reeve —C E Boyle
Deputy Reeve—Mrs H Jermyn
B Shaw
F Wright
B Hoogenboom
T MacMillan
R Simpson
H Patterson

It is not possible to comment on all of the men who served Indeed it is doubtful if comments should be made at all but perhaps a few words may be said about some of the men The first

Reeve, Isaac Carling, has been mentioned previously. Lancelot Hardy served as Reeve for nine years. He was born in Ireland in 1835 and came with his parents to London in 1842. He was a bridge builder by trade and in profession an Anglican and Conservative. Hardy died in 1922 at the age of 87. In 1923, Mrs. Hardy presented a large framed photograph of Hardy to Council. This photograph still hangs in the Council chambers. J. A. Rollins was Reeve for 7 years and mention was made of Rollins in a previous chapter. One amusing incident concerning Rollins involved his giving of gifts at Christmas one year he was seeking election. Someone changed the name on the tags to his opponent. Alexander Quinn Bobier made a number of innovations. He set up the first Committees of Council, one responsible for fire, water and light, one for roads and bridges and a cemetery committee. Bobier also established regular meeting nights, the second and fourth Mondays of the month. He was the first to invite a clergyman to open the first meeting of the year.

B. W. F. Beavers is remembered as one of the most able Reeves. He had been a teacher but entered the business field operating a number of stores in Exeter. The Times described him in 1919 as a "young, energetic, capable leader". He served as Warden of the county in 1916.

Only two heads of Council advanced politically to the Provincial Legislature. One was, of course, Carling and the other was Thomas Pryde. Others such as Tuckey and Cochrane sought higher office unsuccessfully.

W. D. Sanders served 8 years as Reeve but he contested virtually every election in the 1920's and 1930's. He became an ever present figure at nomination meetings. Sanders served as a Justice of the Peace from 1907 to 1952. He died in 1952 at the age of 89.

A. J. Sweitzer "must be recognized as one of the hardest working Reeves the village ever had. His energy and resourcefulness will not soon be forgotten", said the Times. Sweitzer was the last Reeve to head the Council.

Benson W. Tuckey, the first Mayor, holds the record as the longest serving Head. He was Reeve for 9 years from 1940 to 1948 and Mayor in 1951. Tuckey, of course, is well known for his business enterprise and political activities as liberal candidate in two elections. Tuckey was born in Hyde Park and moved to the family farm north of Exeter. In 1929 he started the Tuckey Transport Company at the age of 22 with one truck. He expanded the business over the years and in 1971 he sold what can only be described as a million dollar business. Tuckey served as Warden of the county in 1943. He has served on various boards over the years and must be recognized as one of Exeter's leading citizens.

W. G. Cochrane served as Exeter's second mayor. A lawyer who is now County Crown Attorney. Cochrane in 1953 presented the city of Exeter, England with a silver cigar box and in return he received a BBC recording of the presentation of a gavel to the town of Exeter in December, 1951. This gavel, made from black oak from an old bridge in Exeter, England was presented to a representative of Ontario at Ontario House in 1951. This presentation was made by Exeter, England to Exeter, Ontario to recognize the latter's becoming a town. Tom Pryde later in the month presented the gavel to Mayor Tuckey.

R. E. Pooley was mayor for 7 years and proved to be an able but controversial mayor. Mayor Pooley provided vigorous leadership and did not hesitate to criticize the people of Exeter for apathy and lack of interest in municipal affairs. Mayor Pooley was involved with controversies over the hospital, schools, the dump, and the canning factory.

Eldred Simmons served as Exeter's youngest head of Council, becoming Mayor at the age of 40. He was succeeded by the present Mayor J. H. Delbridge, who in many ways typifies South Huron. Descended from Devon stock, (we mentioned the first Delbridge settler in chapter one) and an Usborne farmer, Mayor Delbridge has served the community well.

The longest terms on Council have been served by James Pickard — 16 years, W. G. Bissett — 18 years, and Ross Taylor — 18 years. Taylor's 18 years were continuous whereas Bissett's were not.

Over the years, people have tended to remember amusing incidents or unflattering performances by Council. For example, in 1954 one councillor had been napping but suddenly came to life when a discussion on increasing councillors' salaries occurred. On the other hand, the 1930 council gave their salary to hold a children's Christmas party and in the early 1960's Mayor Simmons turned his salary back to the town and urged councillors to do the same. Traditionally the reeve entertained council from time to time; for example in 1919 the reeve entertained council at an "oyster feed" in A. W. Statham's restaurant. One retiring councillor entertained the other members of council, the clerk and assessor in a room recently added to his home. The next day this councillor received a new assessment notice!

In 1934 a stormy session of council concerning relief saw the reeve call in the constable to eject a member of council from chambers. The reeve relented, however, and permitted the member to stay. This is the only time things got that violent, although Reeve C. E. Boyle once baited a fellow member of council to the point where that councillor hurled, with deadly accuracy, a heavy book at the Reeve. In September, 1960 there was an argumentative meeting over which Mayor Pooley was very disturbed. But this has gone on for years. In 1878 councillors got under each others' skin as they did in 1968 and will in 1974. Councillor McCallum was fond of "tantalizing Councillor Bissett" and Councillors Carling and Bissett "frequently had loud words" and Councillor Carling spoke "his mind in spite of everyone". The Advocate reported that Reeve Rollins would smile "to see the members getting fired up and calling each other nice names".

On one occasion, in 1947, "during the discussions there was some twitting and prodding of the council" by persons waiting upon council. This got "under Reeve Tuckey's skin" and he expressed his opinions in no uncertain terms.

Councils over the years have been responsible for providing the municipal services. Some of these services such as planning, recreation services, sanitary sewers and zoning are relatively recent, but the basic problems faced by councils over the years have remained the same. These are things like drainage, streets, roads, sidewalks, utilities, acquisition of industry, fire and police protection, relief, and so on.

The next few pages will attempt to review some aspects of municipal work. There is so much detail and so many records in a municipality that a book such as this can only briefly consider a few of these aspects.

> "Exeter can boast of having as fine a lot of firemen as any place its size in Canada, and in fact many larger towns have not got as good a lot of men. At the firemen's demonstration held in Brantford on Friday last they won additional laurels by carrying off the first prize in the international hose reel race. The distance run was five hundred yards, and they had to lay or unwind 300 feet of hose and make connection with the hydrant. The time was 6 or 7 seconds less than that made by the other competitors. The prize is a Silver Water Tilter and two goblets, valued at $100."
>
> (Exeter Times, June 11, 1885)

The fire departments of small towns played more prominent roles in the community in those days than they do now. Uniforms, ranks, fire company names, parades and various other aspects of the fire fighting apparatus gave some color to the village. The prize that was won in Brantford was displayed on Friday, July 18, 1885 in a torch light parade led by the band and chief Robert Pickard. Unfortunately, and inexplicably, the Water Tilter and Goblets were lost in a fire at the Goderich Airport some years ago. They were deposited in the Library but were removed somehow after the war.

There is no information about fires or fire companies in the years before Exeter was incorporated as a village. It is known that in 1870 Exeter acquired from London the old "Rescue" fire engine for $170. No information is available regarding this, other than the fact that it was acquired. Two fire companies existed in Exeter for several decades. These companies existed in the 1870's but, again, it is not clear when the companies were formed. Both companies were well established in 1875. The Rescue Fire Company No. 1 was located in the north end of Exeter in a building owned by Digory Braund immediately west of his blacksmith shop. The Rescue Company wore red uniforms with red fire caps and big black belts. The Defiance Fire Company No. 2 had a larger engine and the men wore royal purple jackets, red fire hats and big black belts. In 1875 the Rescue Company had Captain Sanders at the head and the Defiance Company had Captain McGloghlon.

Some of the other members of the Defiance Company in 1875 were J. W. Lambrooke, S. Oke, A. Sheere, D. Johns, W. Buckingham, George Heyman, C. Brimacombe, J. Evans, B. Shaddock, M. Eacrett, C. Harton, T. A. McConnell, C. Bissett, W. Kerslake, W. Carling, A. McDonald, E. Shute, Silas Sweet, W. Treble, Richard Luxton, I. Handford. In 1876 William Treble became Captain of the Defiance Company, Joseph Orr was First Lieutenant and David Johns was Second Lieutenant, William Southcott was leading hoseman. George Mace was chief engineer.

The fire companies were elaborately organized with various rules and regulations. From time to time the minutes of the Defiance Company reveal dismissals, admissions and fines, according to the by-laws of the company. For example, in September 1876 W. J. Carling was expelled from the Defiance Company on a motion of Richard Luxton and William Buckingham. A few weeks later it was decided that "J. B. Seram is a fit and proper person to become a member of Defiance Fire Company No. 2." Another entry reveals how Seth Balsden was fined 25¢ in December, 1876 for "neglecting to help to take the engine home on the night of the last fire."

The officers of the Defiance Company for three selected years are given below to illustrate the rank structure of the company.

1877

Captain — William Treble
First Lieutenant — Joseph Orr
Second Lieutenant — James Dow
Secretary Treasurer — George Wills
Foreman of the Leading Hose — Isaac Handford
Assistant Foreman of the leading Hose — J. Handford
Leading Hosemen — J. Crocker, R. Luxton
Section Hosemen — W. Southcott, W. Kerslake, A. McDonald, W. Buckingham, J. H. Lambrooke
Others — Charles Eacrett, E. Gill, Richard Bissett

1882

Captain — W Treble
First Lieutenant — E Howard
Second Lieutenant — T Weekes
First Branchman — I Handford
Second Branchman — F Howard
Secretary Treasurer — D Spicer
Foreman of the Leading Hose — T Crocker
Assistant Foreman of the Leading Hose — G. Hill
Leading Hosemen — W Stewart, W Sutton P Johns D Davis W Westcott
Suction Hosemen — J Cudmore W Cann W Creech

1900

Captain — Samuel Sweet
First Lieutenant — Silas Handford
Second Lieutenant — William Creech
Secretary Treasurer — George E Anderson
First Branchman — Eli Snell
Second Branchman — John Rendel
Third Branchman — Samuel Poplestone
Fourth Branchman — A Bagshaw
Foreman of the Hose — James Taylor
Assistant Foreman of the Hose — G E. Anderson
Suction Hoseman — Albert Ford

As we mentioned above then there were two fire companies in Exeter The Defiance Company was probably formed in 1873 when Exeter was incorporated and the Rescue Company may have been formed in the years before incorporation Apparently the first fire hall was located south west of the Exeter United Church The year of its erection is unknown It may have been 1870 since the Rescue engine was acquired then A lock up or jail was evidently located in this building also What Exeter used for fire fighting before the purchase of the Rescue engine is also unknown although the bucket and ladder system was probably the technique used to fight early fires

The first bell in Exeter was found in this James Street fire hall and was rung in the early years by Constable Gill at 6 a m 7 a m 12 noon 1 p m and 6 p m When the town hall was built the old fire hall was sold to Dr Browning It was also used for a time by the Salvation Army as a hall

The North End fire hall was built shortly after incorporation possibly in 1875 The second fire engine the Defiance was acquired It was considered necessary to have two fire stations and engines because the village was rather spread out The North End hall was erected on the Ramsay property and Jim Ramsay rang the bell there. The site of this North End hall was later the site of Moses Amy's house. The hall was later moved to Digory Braund's property where it remained until 1933 when it was demolished.

The members of the fire companies took great pride in their appearance, in their skill, and in the efficient working of the pump. In order to acquire funds for their uniforms and equipment the companies held concerts and engaged in other forms of fund raising. People also made donations to the company. For example, in 1877 Eldred Drew gave $30.00 to the companies. Grateful citizens often made donations, for example, an advertisement in the 1870's read "the Exeter Fire Companies return thanks to John White and Sons for their liberal donations". Firemen had saved the Times' office. Competitions among fire companies from various towns often resulted in money prizes which added to the company's income. Council supported the companies to the extent that the municipality bought the engines and built the stations and provided so much money per man. For 1873 to 1880 the amount seems to have been $2.00. In 1880 the firemen decided to ask for $5.00 per man and they threatened to resign if they did not get the increase. From time to time the firemen would ask council for some financial help in purchasing new uniforms or hats or belts. This was done in 1878 when both companies got new uniforms and paraded through the village on July 1 showing off their fire fighting finery.

The men practiced regularly and an item in the Times of April 5, 1877 reads:

> "No. 2 Company engaged in practice with their engine "Defiance" on Monday evening last. The water was taken from the tank at the corner of Main and Huron Streets. The engine was in good working order and threw the water considerably higher than the roof of the Mansion House."

Fires were always a threat and the frequent practice kept the men in good shape to fight the fires. Of course the regular meetings and practices were social activities as well. The men, however, did have to be in good shape. The two fire engines were hand pumpers and were pulled to fires by the firemen. The first two men to arrive at the engine house took the tongue until the Lieutenants arrived and the others took the drag ropes. Sometimes a horse was used because in October 1877 the Times noted that Engine No. 2 rushed to a fire with "a splendid horse belonging to James Pickard" providing the locomotion for the engine. But most of the time the men pulled the engine to the fire and strenuously worked the pump to throw the water when they reached the fire. The water came from wells or from strategically located tanks which were constructed under the streets at various corners.

There were a number of fires in 1875 and 1876. So many in fact

that the Times suspected an "incendiary". Carling's store nearly burned in 1875 but the fire was discovered in time by Isaac Carling. The Times hoped that "steps will be taken by Council at its next meeting to preserve the village from a recurrence of what might have been a holocaust". On the night of June 17, 1875 Kirkpatrick's Woollen Mill burned down. The Times felt that it was "probably caused by one of the many strangers who are now prowling around".

In February, 1876 the Times reported as follows:

> "The fiery fiend seems to have taken its lodging here for the present. On Tuesday night about nine o'clock Welsh's Carriage Shop was discovered to be on fire ... A rush was made for the "Defiance" which again did splendid and noble work. It arrived however too late to save the building but just in time to save the Crocker livery stable .... Messrs. Dyer, Spicer, and Handford at the hose, worked like heroes ... The Rescue must not be overlooked. She and her brave brigade came from Exeter North to the assistance of the "Defiance" and both men and engine deserve high encomiums of praise."

The stable of the Union Hotel also burned in 1876 but on the Saturday night in question the "Defiance" again was "speedily on the ground" and through George Willis' foresight in locating a well to feed the engine the hotel itself was saved. The cry of fire in the village and the sounding of the bell was heard several other times in 1876. M Eacrett's house nearly burned when a mattress caught fire from the adjacent stove pipe. John Willis' barn burned in a spectacular fire fanned by a strong east wind. The house was saved by the "strenuous exertions of the willing and faithful" firemen. The "Rescue" came down from the North End but the pump failed. It was discovered that a large stone had been driven into the nozzle "by someone". The Times suspected "foul play".

Fortunately none of these fires were disastrous. Indeed, Exeter has been extremely fortunate over the years in that few fires of disastrous proportions have occurred. Many small towns have suffered the loss of the Main Street or a major industry but Exeter's fires have been kept under control before spreading. Industries have burned, such as Dyer and Howard's mill worth $7000, which burned in 1901, the woollen mill and the flax mill, but these fires did not affect the whole town. On February 15, 1879 MacNabb's Bending Factory burned. It had burned two years before but MacNabb had rebuilt. In April 1878 he had become insolvent. MacNabb sold it and various financial arrangements were made which, said the Times, "the people generally could not understand". According to the Times, two attempts were made to burn the factory before the successful fire occurred on February 15, 1879. The Times sarcastically reported that one of the supposed owners, a Mr. Keene, when awakened and told that his factory was on fire "got up — in about an hour." It was further reported that Mr Keene and his men worked "vigorously" to save a pile of spoke timber Each man carried one of those "heavy pieces of timber (about two feet long and two inches in diameter) . . . laid it gently on the ground and returned slowly for another" A hearing was held to investigate the fire Dr Hyndman presided over the 17 man jury in an attempt to find out "who done it" T McCallum testified that he had told several people that he "feared they meant to burn it as (he) could see no way they were going to make money out of it otherwise" The long report of the hearing indicated that it had certainly been burned by someone who hoped to gain from the insurance. This was not the first, nor the last such fire in Exeter

The flax mill fire occurred on May 9, 1921 It started about noon and "before anything could be done the building was a mass of flames" The fire could have been very widespread since a "brisk breeze" was blowing sparks for long distances A dozen other buildings caught fire but the firemen prevented the loss of three structures The loss was valued at $10 000 In 1925 a large frame storage building belonging to the flax mill burned with 2000 bushels of flax 20 tons of upholstery and 26 loads of unscutched flax straw plus wagons and equipment

Probably the most serious fire in Exeter occurred on June 17, 1920 when "four frame barns in the business section were destroyed by fire" The fire "seriously threatened the main business portion of the town The fire started in a stable belonging to W. J Statham at the rear of his store It rapidly spread to several other buildings It was only by the strenuous efforts of the firemen assisted by bucket brigades" that kept the loss to only four barns The other barns were those owned by C T Brooks express agent F Wood, butcher, and E Willis Buildings all over the Main Street area, including the frame stable of J G Jones, Southcott's warehouse, Heaman's warehouse and others were ignited by sparks but the fires were quickly put out Mr. Statham's and Mr Makins ice houses had the roofs burned This fire which could have destroyed much of the Main Street was started by two boys who were in Statham's barn looking for two young pups. The boys lit a match which ignited some straw and the flames spread quickly

As far as is known only one person ever died in a fire in Exeter This tragedy occurred in April 1937 when Mrs A J Little was burned in a fire in Exeter North Her three small grandchildren and her two sons escaped

In December 1899 there was a $7 000 fire in the Exeter Electric Light and Power Company plant Below is a description of this fire

> "At an early hour on Sunday morning, presumably three o'clock, fire broke out in the Electric Power House owned by Tremaine and Snell, and before noticed, the entire building was almost gutted . . . the construction of the building confined the force of the flames within the walls and thus prevented the Metropolitan Hotel and J. P. Ross' store across the street, from igniting. The intense heat, however, cracked J. P. Ross' fine plate glass front, as well as a large number of windows in the hotel . . . About nine o'clock the roof came in and the heavy walls fell, leaving the large building an almost total wreck . . . The origin of the fire is a mystery . . . We learn that the Company will rebuild at once, and in order that the town may not experience any prolonged inconvenience from loss of the lights, it is proposed to place dynamos in some factories and connect the various circuits at once."

In 1901, Digory Braund's blacksmith shop burned; in 1906 A. J. Rollins' grain warehouse burned when it was ignited by a spark from a locomotive.

One of the most tragic fires in the area occurred outside Exeter at Sodom in 1923 when Silas Stanlake's house burned. In this fire, six persons died. This fire is described below in the words of the Advocate report:

> "A most disastrous fire occurred at the home of Silas Stanlake three miles west of Exeter on Friday night, about 11.30 o'clock, when in some manner his home caught on fire after the family had retired, and his wife, Maud Marie Porter, aged 38, his brother Albert Stanlake, aged 46, and four of his five children, Clarence Audrey, aged 12, Charlie, aged 9, Wilfred, aged 4, and Arthur Gilbert, a babe of three weeks, were either suffocated or burned to death . . . Mr. Stanlake went downstairs, and was horrified to find the kitchen in flames. He immediately called to the family to get up and come downstairs, while he attempted to put out the fire by getting a fire extinguisher which hung in the kitchen. Immediately however the main portion of the house burst into flames and it was impossible for Mr. Stanlake to get up the stairs to rescue those in the upper storey . . . The remains were recovered and these were taken to the funeral parlors of Mr. M. E. Gardiner, Exeter from which place the funeral took place on Sunday afternoon, to the Exeter cemetery. The service was conducted by Rev. A. A. Trumper and a great many people gathered in the opera house to pay their last respects to the deceased. The cause of the fire still remains a mystery and probably always will."

A fire bug or an "incendiary" was at work in Exeter in May 1895. J. P. Ross' store next to the Metropolitan Hotel was burned.

> "The fire was of incendiary origin and had been started in five different places by some one familiar with the premises. As all the outer doors were locked, as left by Mr. Ross, an investigation revealed the means of access to the building by the firebug. A trap door leading to the coal oil cellar under the storehouse was opened . . . The fire was carefully kindled in two places in the business office, and under one of the counters and in the storehouse several barrels upon which had

> been piled a bunch of brooms, saturated with turpentine, were also fired. The attempt to burn the premises was a bold one. The motive for the deed is a mystery as Mr. Ross knows of no enemy holding sufficient malice to commit such a daring deed.”

Also in 1895 fire destroyed the Main Street Methodist Church. The description of the fire appeared in the March 28, 1895 issue of the Times. This fire was thought to have been set by a firebug as well.

> “Sunday morning about quarter to four o'clock the citizens were aroused from their peaceful slumbers by the ringing of the fire alarm. The fire had gained such headway before being discovered by the neighbours that it required no speculation on the part of any to locate the scene. The bright reflection from the already enveloped building woke the neighbours and by the time the alarm was sounded the roof had gone in and the flames were ascending high into the tower. The fire companies were soon on hand, but all attention was directed to the saving of the sheds and adjacent buildings, which, during the progress of the fire, ignited several times and it was with difficulty and with great labour that the residences of Capt. Kemp and Will Folland on the next street were saved from the destructing element. Large cinders were carried for half a mile. It is presumed that the fire was of incendiary origin, no light or fire having been used in the church since the preceding Friday, but to conceive a motive for the act is an impossibility since the church was in a prosperous condition.
> The building was burned to the ground, not a vestige of wood used in its construction being left, and even the heavy walls crumbled and fell.”

In August of 1894 “swamp fires were causing uneasiness in Exeter having reached the bush, just west of the station.” Fortunately these fires did not reach the village but they did burn out large areas of the swamp.

In recent years serious fires have been kept to a minimum in Exeter. Helge Jensen's woodworking plant burned in 1948, the Huron Lumber Company burned in 1954, and the Exeter Cooperative burned, to name a few. Probably the worst fire in recent decades was the New Years' Eve fire at the Exeter Produce Plant.

Over the years, then, Exeter has been rather more fortunate than many other Ontario towns and villages as far as fires are concerned. While there have been serious blazes which destroyed individual buildings no fire has swept through a section of the town. Many Ontario centres have had fires which destroyed whole sections of the community.

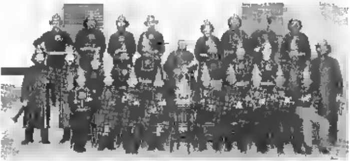
The fire-fighting apparatus which the town originally had has been mentioned. That is, the Rescue and the Defiance engines. In 1891, a hook and ladder vehicle was added. About the turn of the century a steam fire engine was purchased, the old Rescue pumper was traded in on this vehicle. The "steamer" had an upright boiler type of engine which burned wood. This apparatus could throw water to the top of the James Street Church steeple. The steam pumper obviated the necessity of the exhausting hand pumping but it was still propelled down the village streets by man power, although the occasional horse was forced into service.

In 1927 a motor driven engine was purchased from London and in 1944 a new truck was purchased. There was only one fire station in Exeter by that time. In recent years a fire agreement with the adjacent townships has resulted in the acquisition of more modern fire fighting apparatus.

Water supply for fire fighting came from private wells or from tanks which were located on most Main Street corners and on several back street corners. For example, a large tank was built at the corner of Andrew and Victoria Streets to provide protection for the school. This tank was installed in 1902 by Peter Bawden and measured 12' x 24' x 10'. It cost $273. Evidently in 1904 this tank was enlarged to 31½' in length and had a well 3' x 3' x 2' at one end.

In 1895 Council was asked to construct a tank at the Metropolitan Hotel corner. Since "the salt water used by the firemen is most destructive to everything it touches". It is not clear what the source of this salt water was that the firemen used at this corner.

Water mains began to appear about 1901 and in 1909 the stand pipe was constructed and the dam was rebuilt. Gradually a network of water mains using water from the river provided improved fire protection to the village.



The Rescue Fire Company No. 1, 1886

Firemen were called at first by bells on the old fire hall and on the north end fire hall. In 1884 Council bought a new bell from a firm in Troy, New York for $300. It weighed 1500 pounds and "Council was at a loss" to know what to do with it or where to place it since it was too heavy for either fire hall

After the new town hall was built in 1887 the bell erected in the tower of this building called the firemen to their posts

In 1902 a steam whistle was placed on the grist mill across from the town hall In 1903 Council experimented with the steam whistle using it instead of the bell for the daily time signals at 6 7 12 1 and 6 o'clock but the Times disapproved saying it "had the effect of frightening horses" Fortunately the use of the cacophonous whistle was discontinued and the use of the bell restored In 1944 the siren was placed in the Town Hall

In so far as organization goes the old fire companies were disbanded by Council and a new fire department organized under Chief William Treble. The old companies continued to operate however much as before In the 1890's James Weekes was appointed Chief, he remained Chief for forty years until the 1930's he was on the fire department for over fifty years A number of others served on the fire department for many years as well Ed Treble served fifty years until 1946 Richard Davis retired in 1946 after forty-eight years Others with long service were Herb Ford Jack Norry Sid Sanders M Quance Walter Cunningham, Louis Day Algoe Sanders, Irwin Ford Frank Creech and Ernest Wells

The present volunteer Fire Brigade is still called Defiance Company No 2

Police protection has always been a municipal responsibility since the passage of the Baldwin Act In Exeter the first police service was provided by an officer who was designated as Constable and Street Commissioner Probably the first man appointed to this office was John Gill Gill had come from Cornwall, England to Canada in 1856 settling first in Whitby and coming to Exeter about 1858 Gill may have been appointed Constable before Exeter was incorporated but it is likely that he was appointed in 1873 by the Village Council Gill remained on the job throughout the 1870's and 1880's. He received a salary of $50 00 a year as bailiff and constable Alfred A Bowey was another early Constable in Exeter James Creech served as Chief Constable and Street Commissioner from the early 1880's until 1902 Creech's duties included those in the following list

1) Patrol streets until midnight
2) Clean the town hall
3) Perform duties of sanitary inspector
4) Enforce the village by laws
5) Ring the town bell at 6 a m , 7 a m , 12 noon 1 p m , 6 p m , 7 p.m. and 9 p m curfew if required by Council
6) Collect the Statute Labor commutations
7) Light the street lamps

Creech had to post a bond and in 1887 he received a salary of $325 00 for the year In 1887 Constable Creech dealt with the usual police matters The safe in the Verity Plow Works was blown The Station House was robbed and horses were stolen from the Commercial Hotel livery stable Burglaries occurred from time to time and in one week three stores were burglarized in 1891 Other robberies included such things as cow thefts orchard thefts shoplifting and commonly, timber thefts from Canada Company lands An example of this last item occurred in 1876 when John Ironsides a Company agent brought timber thieves before Justice of the Peace George Willis Constable Creech also had to deal with drunkenness Sabbath breaking and rowdyism He was called upon by the Times to do something about "loafers" on the streets making "rude remarks to ladies" "Gyps" passed through town from time to time and took the village folk for a few dollars The Constable also had to control dogs cows and all manner of other animals on the loose Noise in the streets drew complaints Teams with improper bells on the sleighs and fast driving on the streets drew the Times criticism Why, people drove at twice the legal limit of 7 mph and the Constable was laughed at! Disgraceful! "This furious driving on Main Street should be put an end to!" said the Times In 1878 the Times had observed that some Usborne men had been brought before Squire Gidley the Justice of the Peace to answer for their fast driving, and "unseemly and riotous conduct" A "few more offenders should be seriously dealt with" commented the Times

Boys were a constant problem for Constable Creech Indeed, they were a constant problem for his predecessors and have been a continuous problem for his successors They jumped on sleighs and wagons they stole they shot peas they played in the streets Indeed in 1884 Council passed a by law prohibiting the playing of lacrosse kicking football, throwing snowballs or any other missile on village streets. The Times' headline read "BEWARE BOYS" There were a number of letters in the Advocate concerning "the boys" The theme of half of the letters was "what are we going to do with our boys?" And this half of the correspondence dealt with the behaviour of the "boys" which concerned the older generation "Improper conduct, improper language, cigarette smoking tobacco chewing and drinking" were some of the activities which were being indulged in by the boys and which drew the wrath of the older folk People also commented on the boys laziness destructiveness and lounging around the streets In other words the older generation criticized the boys for doing the same things that every generation of boys indulges in and which somehow become more evil when you pass a certain age

Some of the boys replied Parts of two letters are quoted below

> I am one of those boys who have been so swiftly sliding down the road that leads to the teetotal destruction of body mind and soul To judge from the words of these writers we have been guilty of all the crimes in the calendar Did you ever hear two old gentlemen talk about their doings in their younger days They tell stories of depredations, destruction of property satisfying of lusts etc. for which a boy now would spend some nights in the "cooler" or be made pay a fine Yet they dare talk about the boys of today being altogether foul and sinful What must the world outside of our village think of our boys and girls? People will think of us as they did of the Donnellys some years ago "Do not go near Exeter least thy purity be contaminated by its foul atmosphere and thy good name blasted forever" I know that the boys are not so bad as pictured. Wherein are we so bad? It seems to be more particularly in the smoking of cigarettes and the drinking of liquor By whom are those articles sold? Are there any boys selling them? Is there no law against it? If the boys could not get cigarettes or liquor they would not desire them And is not the seller a man, not a boy?

Another letter read

> "I am one of the bad boys of Exeter of whom so many unkind and hard things have been written of late Are Exeter girls and boys worse than the girls and boys of other towns? How is it that we are permitted to remain at large? In the meantime Mr Editor will you kindly point out a few of the grey haired saints of the village, not the church goers, but the saints If peradventure there be one, who is he that we may emulate his example? We hear the old people swearing, lying or backbiting their neighbours we see them fighting or struggling one with the other to the end that one may succeed and the other fail — on the David Harum principles of "Do unto the other fellow what he would do to you if he got a chance and see that you get in the first crack How about the old rascals in and out of our churches who justify the ballot box stuffers the ballot switchers and would our girls and boys burn the West Elgin ballots and swear that they knew nothing about the burning? No Sir we would not, yet we see our parents preachers and all upholding such conduct and winking at all sorts of political hypocrisy The open hearted free generous rollicking girls and boys of Exeter, refuse to be slandered by any bumptious newspaper monitor — and slandered I maintain we have been most shamefully

Various solutions were presented by some of the village philosophers to the problem of what to do with the boys Selections from some of these solutions are offered below, for the edification of the present generation of boys

> "Physical culture as well as general morals should take a decided place in our school curriculum The suggestion that a shed be erected on the school grounds, is an excellent one and I hope that the trustees

will carry it out It would save the school give room for drilling boys and girls serve as a play room in wet, hot or stormy weather be used for general picnics and built so that both compartments could be thrown into one, serve as a splendid hall for summer meetings of a public character What about the most dangerous period of a boy's life from sixteen to twenty-one years? The ordinary village or town life does not present sufficient or harmless allurement to prevent boys and even girls from running after harmful ones There are prayer meetings league meetings endeavor meetings class meetings, special meetings Bible meetings etc etc almost every night of the week But the average boy of today does not take such a deep and absorbing interest in those as to compel his attendance It appears to us that had the boys a common meeting ground such as a large room It would simply be a boys' club room Let the boys practically run their own show on certain lines Appoint weekly one of themselves, as Censor to see the rules carried out No gambling no filthy foul or objectionable language, reasonable hours and proper order One night a week to be devoted to a debate by the boys themselves

Another letter writes

"I agree spending your evenings in self-culture, such as debating on the questions of the day Music also is very essential to a young man's education You have your field games in summer for physical exercise and amusement, your skating rink for the same purpose in the winter and there are the churches with all their elevating and refining influences Now I think you want something more substantial than another playhouse I think the parents of Exeter would rather contribute five hundred dollars each to the building of a large factory than five dollars to another place of amusement as the former would give openings for bookkeepers, typewriters superintendents engineers business managers shipping clerks, travelling salesmen and an army of employees and Exeter could man every position with their own boys"

"It is a common thing to notice on our streets small boys of different ages indulging in the use of tobacco some chewing some smoking cigarettes some cigars and others a pipe This certainly should not be and it would seem as though those dealing in the weed have little or no knowledge of the law regarding its sale to minors" (It was illegal to dispense tobacco in any form to a person under eighteen years of age)

So the boys were, indeed, a problem for the constables. Constable Gill in 1878 tried to stop the boys from insulting the ladies and "horsing" around on the Commons on Sunday afternoon One fall night during these same years "A bovine of the feminine gender, with a dozen or so old tins attached to her caudal appendage, made Sunday night hideous by the clattering" The boys were at it again! Even the very young lads were not above the occasional burglary as the following item from an issue of the 1875 Times illustrates

"On Tuesday night last at a late hour as Mr T Carling was retur

> ning home from a skating party he saw two lads aged about nine and eleven whose names we suppress for the parents sake working with a shovel and trying to gain an entrance into his father's store by the cellar window

In 1890, the Advocate suggested that "the destructiveness of the youths of Exeter is almost beyond belief" The boys broke windows in vacant houses, they threw stones at the chancel window of the "English Church' they set fire to Mrs Murdock s green house and cut down the lamp posts on Main Street. "If the youths realize any amusement in such work the sooner they are given a few months in jail the better , said the Advocate.

Boys were not the only source of trouble however Young and not so young men caused a good deal of trouble rather often. Exeter was considered to be a very rowdy town from time to time and in 1899 the following item appeared in the Times It illustrates the problem clearly

> 'The disgraceful scene on Main Street Tuesday night, lasting for several hours, is another illustration if any were needed, of the necessity of curbing the disposition and language of men who make our streets a place for the use of vile language and conduct nobecoming any respectable class of men That the air of a public highway should reek with bad language is evil enough and it is time that steps were taken to prevent a repetition of the occurrence, Free speech and the right of every man to express himself publicly and privately is clearly limited by the proprieties of social intercourse and the amenities of public life, but such blasphemy as was resorted to Tuesday night is entirely out of the question We withhold names this time but if the like occurs again we certainly shall expose the guilty parties

Keeping an eye on ' visitors' to the village was another job that had to be looked after by the constable of the town. In January 1878 the Times commented "There are several hard looking cases in town Lock up carefully when you retire lest some of these long fingered gentry should attempt an entrance' In July 1884 the following item appeared in the Times It, too refers to visitors to the town and the item is quoted in its entirety because it provides some of the color of village life in the 1880 s.

A Queer Lot of Vagrants"

> "On Friday afternoon last the loungers about town were provided with a new sensation by the appearance on the streets of decidedly the oddest company which ever graced them. The party comprised two men two women, and half a dozen or so of children The men led each a huge brown bear two lads of fifteen or so each leading a smaller bear and four monkeys trotted after the procession The bears were mangy and ill groomed, the men were wild looking ragged and dirty and as the men chanted a monotonous ballad in some unknown jargon while the muzzled bears clumsily danced to the

> melody, it was hard to say whether the men or the bears deserved to rank higher in the scale of civilization. The women were ragged, dirtier, and more unkempt looking than the men, led each a pony fitted with a packsaddle, on which was piled a miscellaneous lot of camp-equipage with a couple of little children stacked on top of the pile while one carried an infant in a basket slung on her hip. Two philosophizing looking donkeys, one bearing a load of bundles so big that only its nose and tail were visible, brought up the rear. The men, the women, the bears, the girls, and the children, all begged assiduously and persistently from the spectators, and the only self respecting members of the cavalcade were the donkeys, who looked very much as if they were in the procession solely in discharge of a disagreeable duty and were themselves ashamed of the whole thing. The party, by their appearance, dress, and equipage, appeared to be Bohemian and Hungarian gypsies, but in a few words of English, which they had at command, professed to have come from European Turkey. If they really were from Turkey, they had failed to acquire respect for that text of the Mohammedan religion which enjoins abstinence from strong drink, for the whole party, men and women, appeared to take as naturally to the curse of Canada as if they have been brought up on it. One of the women went into a barroom, laid down five cents for a glass of whiskey, and tossed it off as neatly as it could be done. The party camped in Murray's grove, about a mile north of here. Just before reaching their camping place, one of the crowd met with a mishap. It appears, while a lad leading one of the large bears, with a monkey mounted upon its back, was walking across a platform in order to reach the house of Mr. Alex Taylor, one of the boards flew up, precipitating all three in a heap in the ditch. The boy was somewhat injured. Saturday morning they started for Clinton to take part in the Orangemen's procession.

The type of group described above moved around the country earning a poor living and attracting much attention. Tramps caused concern as the following item indicates. This article comes from the September 14, 1893 issue of the Times.

> "The country seems to be swarming with tramps who are doing more or less stealing from farm houses and stores, and it would be a safe plan to keep a close watch on them on every occasion. Doors and windows should be properly secured at night, and if you have a dog put him on a small allowance to get him in proper training for these unwelcome guests."

Gypsies passed through town from time to time as well.

Gill and Creech then were kept busy. In July 1888, Gill arrested a counterfeit gang member named Ben Mackenzie and Creech picked up a local citizen named John V., who, as the Times said, "was becoming very popular in his special line — larceny." He had stolen a watch from the bartender of the Central Hotel. Another of the Constable's jobs in these years was the "removal of indigent persons to the County Poorhouse," also known as the

Huron County House of Refuge.

In July, 1902, James Creech was either fired or resigned as Constable, Street Commissioner and Collector. It seems that Council had apparently considered the possibility of replacing Creech. Thomas Bissett had applied for the job in 1894 saying that "Mr. Creech has been a good servant, though performing nothing that would entitle him to a life lease of the office." Bissett had offered to take the job for $300 but Council decided to stick with Creech at a $365 salary. Tom Bissett was incensed and demanded an explanation from Council for robbing the village of $65. Council, he felt, was being negligent in its duties.

In any event, Creech was finally replaced by Wesley J. Bissett at $365 a year in July of 1902. Bissett's duties were similar to those performed by Creech. Bissett was on the job in the fall of 1902 when the Council and the School Board disagreed over who was to pay for Halloween damage at the school. The Board said Council should pay since the village was responsible for protection to persons and property. Council, of course, replied that it had hired three extra Constables and that was all it could do.

Bissett received just as much criticism as his predecessors and as much as his successors would receive since village or small town police seldom please everyone. People complained in 1909 about cows and hogs wandering loose. But Bissett and Council did nothing despite the 1908 Cow By-law which required that cows be herded from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Under this by-law, cow owners had to hire a man to collect the villagers' cows. The herder usually took the cows along the roadsides outside of the town. But cows still wandered at large and Thomas Brock complained that Constable Bissett had placed his cow in the town yards and thereby prevented the cow from returning home. Animals were frequently the cause of problems for the police. In 1891 the Advocate demanded a by-law prohibiting dogs from running at large. Useless "dogs should be taken to the woods and quietly shot" said the editor. In the Fall of 1891 "nefarious" hen roost robbers were detected. They were employees of the salt well and had been stealing chickens at night. They "skipped" town when warrants for their arrest were issued.

Once in a while Bissett pleased someone. In March, 1909 he caught the boys who had "thrown eggs at Principal L. C. Fleming's house". He also locked up William B. for failing to provide the "necessaries of life for his family". By 1915 Bissett was earning $525 per year. By 1920 he received $750. He had tried in 1919 to reduce the rowdyism on Main Street perhaps successfully since he got a raise. He had not, however, caught the spring time "peeping tom" who put a ladder up to bedroom windows to see what he could see!

Wes Bissett remained on the job until 1930 when he died at the

age of 76 having served as Chief Constable and Street Commissioner for nearly 30 years.

Bissett was succeeded by John Clark Norry who was appointed Chief Constable and Street Commissioner in 1930. Norry had come to Exeter in 1896 and had been employed by the Sutherland and Innes Company in their stave factory. He had worked for the village laying cement walks in 1909 and had worked on the paving of Main Street in 1920. Norry was reputed to be an expert in the installation of drains and he is supposed to have known where every drain in the village was located. Norry died in 1961 at the age of 84; he served as Constable for 23 years until 1953.

In 1931 William Wareing was appointed as village night watchman and was later made night constable with full police status. He served until 1950 when he resigned saying "There's no use asking me to stay because I can't live on $27.50 a week."

Over the more recent years the Exeter police force has been gradually expanded to five men who can be accurately described as professionals and whose duties no longer include collection of various taxes, ringing the town hall bell, cleaning the hall, and so on.

Another municipal agency was the Board of Health. The Board was possibly constituted in the 1870's but the first records date from 1886. The Board in that year consisted of the Reeve Dr. Rollins, the Clerk, M. Eacrett, J. P. Clarke and Thomas McCallum. By way of illustrating the work of the Board the following cases are noted from the 1886 records. The Board had two officers to whom it delegated responsibilities. The Medical Officer of Health was Dr. Lutz and the Sanitary Inspector was James Creech.

In February, 1886, George Willis complained about an "offensive stable" owned by John Wood. Willis appeared before the Board saying that "he would be compelled to remove from his house if it were continued". William Grigg reported "that the odour from the stable was such as to cause a sickening sensation". The Board of Health held a court of inquiry in Fanson's Hall and found Wood innocent of having an offensive or harmful condition at his stable.

The Board dealt with water closets, privys (which had to be 100 feet from the house), disposal of slops, disposal of excreta from privy vaults and similar items. In their end-of-the-year report the 1886 Board said "we have endeavoured to discharge our duty faithfully and some of it has not been the pleasantest". Indeed, it probably was not.

Over the years until the 1920's or 30's when the Board was dissolved it dealt with complaints about the creek which was in an "extraordinary unsanitary condition". On September 1, 1887, the

Times contained the following editorial It is quoted at length because it presents a good picture of conditions

> "The health of the southern part of the village is not now nor has it for years been as good as it might be, it falls far short of being as free from fever and other germs, as is the centre and northern part of the place Whatever the cause may be, the residents along Huron and Ann Streets have for years been the victims of typhoid fever the majority of which, if not all being endemical cases Why should this be? There appears to be every reason that we should have one of the healthiest places in the Province in which to live. Where the land is well drained, we never hear of a case of endemic sickness What sickness there is is confined to that portion of the village lying south of Ann Street where we understand the sanitary regulations are not of the best The land lies low and is poorly drained which together with the recent climatic conditions rendered that district more liable to such diseases But the real and more prevalent cause of typhoid fever is filth and if there is any one place in the village where filth accumulates faster than another it is in the cesspool or open drain which crosses Main Street in the vicinity above mentioned For years there has been an accumulation of debris in this drain, which becoming stagnate impregnates the air in its precincts with fever germs, and not until this drain is covered or regularly cleaned out will the neighbourhood be free from diseases caused by such nuisances If the Board of Health do not feel inclined or prepared to grapple with it the Council should look into the matter and nothing should be left undone or unattempted to correct the existing evils We are only voicing the sentiments of the public when we ask for an immediate and effective investigation into the cause of the fever sickness in the southern part of the village"

Not only the creek but the Ausable River area was used as a dumping ground from the very early years In the 1890's the Times complained

> 'The southern banks of the 'Sauble river are made to present a disgraceful sight by their being used as a dumping ground for all kinds of debris The Board of Health should take the matter in hand and have the practice stopped not only from a health standpoint but to reclaim a pleasant leisure walk along the river The citizens are not to blame for the disgraceful state of the river banks as this is the only spot where refuse can be dumped and it must be dumped somewhere On the council falls the onus of blame as repeatedly it has been suggested that they purchase a hole somewhere where such matter can be deposited far enough out to be of nuisance to no one We would suggest that a lot in the old gravel pit on the lake road be purchased from Mr A McDonnell The holes there are of little value to the owner but would make a splendid dumping ground'

The Board was concerned about diseases like typhoid which was very prevalent in 1888 Smallpox measles scarlet fever indeed, all communicable diseases concerned the Board Unsanitary conditions contributed to disease and the Board did its best to have the "removal of excreta from privy vaults" done carefully, to have drains, cesspools, wells, garbage, slaughter houses, disposal of offal, sale of meat and many other things looked after properly, but people were very careless and did not respond well to requests to prevent various forms of contamination

The Medical Officer of Health visited infected houses and disinfected them as described below

> "The Board of Health have purchased an apparatus for the disinfection of houses after diptheria, scarlet fever, consumption, etc A new disinfectant formaldehyde is used A room and its contents exposed to the vapor from it for four or five hours are found to be completely freed from germs of any infectious or contagious disease Sulphur has not been found to be satisfactory for this purpose, so the Board following suggestions from the Provincial Board, purchased this machine which already has been found to work well and will be of inestimable value in preventing the spread of disease Not alone is it useful after infectious diseases but of great use in removing and destroying bad odors, etc which sometimes penetrate or exist in some dwellings"

Smallpox appeared from Time to time and caused the town some concern as it did in 1913 The following items illustrate this concern

> "As the Board of Health View the Situation"
>
> "We wish to state facts in connection with the smallpox scare in Exeter From January last a few of the children have had what their parents called chicken pox In most cases no physician was called But where one was called in in every case but one the Dr pronounced the case chicken pox and quite mild at that That case was a grandson of Ex Reeve John Taylor In that case the Dr called was suspicious of smallpox He called in Dr McNally District M H O He withheld his decision on the case but called in Dr Bell, Provincial M H O He examined four cases and pronounced the severest as one of the semi-confluent type of smallpox Some of the doctors still maintain that it is only chicken pox Be that as it may young Taylor is improving every day The local Board of Health at once proceeded to quarantine disinfect and clean up the town of every suspicion Exeter so far as the scare is concerned is just as safe to enter and leave as it ever was There is no danger whatever
>
> W J Heaman Reeve
> A Quackenbush M D M H O
> H E Huston Chairman

> "The Smallpox Scare"
>
> "Exeter is in quarantine, travellers skipped the town on the first freight, express or democrat wagon, anything or everything to get out in a hurry Passengers getting off at London from the L H & B are undergoing the strictest scrutiny and vermin reigns the only thing lacking is that we are not dying off by the wholesale, according to the

city dailies. But according to inside information there are but a few houses in town quarantined, business is going on in its normal way. medical men are of different opinions as to most of the cases that are being placarded but in any event every precaution is being taken even to the point of ridiculousness in the minds of some, to protect both the citizens and those coming to town. If it is smallpox it isn't going much further but will leave town in a hurry if the Board of Health and citizens have their way.

For several weeks what was diagnosed as chickenpox and what a great many still think was chickenpox has been prevalent in town among the small children. Smallpox was first suspected in the case of Reginald Taylor, 12 year old grandson of Mr. John Taylor. Mr. McNally of Owen Sound, district Health Officer, was called in but he refused to pronounce the case as it seems several of the symptoms of smallpox were lacking. Dr. McNally in turn sent for Dr. Bell, Provincial Health Officer. Dr. Bell visited four homes and pronounced it smallpox. Steps were at once taken to have all homes where chicken pox had been treated quarantined.

A meeting of the Board of Health and School Board was called and it was decided to take every precaution. The school, churches, skating rink and bowling alley were closed up. The Board of Health are wise in taking these steps as it ensures safety not only to our townspeople but those who are coming into town. The fact that all homes where the disease has been suspected is being thoroughly disinfected and every precaution is being taken ensures safety to all. The disease has been among the children and some cases have been traced back for two months but all have had to undergo the ordeal of fumigation. The quarantine on most of the places will be lifted this week.

Public vaccination is being held at the Town Hall and all school children must be vaccinated. Older persons who have not been vaccinated for some time are recommended to become so at once.

Cholera was a threat from time to time, although it never appeared in epidemic proportions in Huron or indeed in Ontario after 1866. There are few records to indicate the extent of the disease in Exeter although in 1884 Dr. Hyndman urged that "In view of the threatened outbreak of cholera" preventative measures be taken such as "the removal of night soil, which should be deodorized and mixed with lime and ashes." He also urged the cleaning of the creeks, backyards, wells, and other problem areas.

Typhoid occurred in serious proportions. 1891, for example, was a particularly bad year.

In 1918, 1919, and 1920, influenza struck Exeter claiming several lives including Thomas Creech whose obituary is given below as an illustration of how the disease would claim even the young and strong.

"The death occurred on Tuesday evening, December 17th, of Thomas Garnet Creech, Canadian Express Agent at Exeter, at the age of 38

> years, 2 months and 6 days. The late Mr. Creech had been ill only ten days of influenza, following a heavy cold, which he contracted two or three days before taking his bed. He was of a rugged constitution and was given every possible attention, and even to the last, hope was entertained that he would recover. But the disease had too firm a hold and he gradually sank."

During the epidemics the churches were closed and public gatherings were prohibited by the Board of Health. The Board also advised the villagers "to keep from having the disease — keep away from those who have it if you can: build up the body by eating nourishing foods, dressing comfortably, getting lots of sleep, living in the open air and bright well ventilated rooms; disinfecting the mouth, nose and throat with chloretone or listerine, or sulphate of quinine".

Over the years, the problems dealt with by the Board of Health have gradually diminished. Medicine, better sanitation, improved water supplies, control of dumping, and pure food laws, have contributed. The town has secured a dumping ground which has been in use for about 20 years. The dump was secured only after a lawsuit involving George Shaw and the town. Animals are now controlled in town: the cow problem no longer exists. There isn't a cow left within the corporation limits. Indeed, there are few domestic animals left in town. In 1893 in Exeter there were 1682 people, 90 dogs, 144 horses, 189 cows, 13 sheep and 30 hogs. With the elimination of domestic animals the manure disposal problem disappeared and it was a problem with the horse population alone producing about one and one-half tons of manure per day. The outside toilet has gone and with it the disposal problem. The "honey dipper" is now a phrase from the "golden" past. The open ditch which long caused a sanitation problem in the south part of the town has been closed in for most of its length. A sewage system serves most of the town now and in many ways there is less obvious organic pollution now than there was in the past.

Perhaps this is the logical place to mention the provision of hospital services in Exeter. South Huron Hospital was opened in 1953. Prior to this various forms of hospital service had been provided in nursing homes, maternity homes, and private hospitals. For example, C. B. Snell tried to operate a hospital in the old Pickard house which stood south of Snell Bros. garage. The present R. Pooley house on Huron Street and the Ausable office funtioned as maternity homes. Dr. Hyndman had a small hospital in his office. In 1944 the Charles Gidley house on William Street was willed to the village for use as a hospital. After considerable debate Council declined acceptance of the house.

In 1949 the Exeter Lions Club led a movement to erect a

hospital in Exeter and in that year plans for a 25 bed hospital were prepared The proposed site was on land owned by R E Pooley on Huron Street East The Lions hospital committee which worked on the project included Elmer Bell Chas S MacNaughton, Tom Pryde Dr Dunlop and Herb Eilber This committee led the drive for funds In September 1949 the South Huron Hospital Association was formed with the following officers E D Bell Chairman, W G Cochrane Treasurer R N Creech Medical Advisory Committee, Dr Dunlop and C S MacNaughton

By June of 1950 it had been decided that the hospital would be built in Riverview Park and a Board of Trustees was elected by the subscribers E D Bell was named chairman of the Board W G Cochrane and R N Creech were elected treasurer and secretary respectively However doubts about the site continued to affect the Board's planning. 'A strong movement led by Mr Ted Buswell sought to preserve Riverview Park' Don Southcott said it was too late to save the park Council had offered Riverview Park in 1950 to the hospital board but in view of the objections of Buswell and others, in January, 1951 Council rescinded its previous motion to deed the park to the hospital association In February, 1951 Ted Buswell presented a petition signed by 550 Exeter citizens requesting that the Park be preserved and that the hospital be built elsewhere E D Bell was disappointed saying that one "couldn't find a better site in all of Ontario". Other sites were considered including Canning Factory property and a site north of the river

In May, 1951 the Carling property became available but it was not until November, 1951 that the Hospital Association finally decided to purchase the Carling estate and in the spring of 1952 the hospital was finally started Financing for the project came from local subscribers, the federal and provincial governments charitable organizations such as the Atkinson Foundation and the local municipalities The building was opened in January, 1953 Since that time the hospital has been enlarged and improved

The cemetery became a municipal responsibility in 1903 Council appointed a Board in 1903 consisting of Dr Lutz, J Senior, William Weekes F W Gladman and Thomas Prior to administer the cemetery The Exeter Union Burial Grounds had been established in 1864 when five acres were acquired by a board of trustees The first trustees were Thomas Gidley A Freeman and William Sanders The cemetery grounds gradually deteriorated to the point in 1900 that the Times described it as a ' disgrace to the Community' A group of people including John Allison made an effort to improve the grounds In 1901 a new Board for the Exeter Union Burial Grounds was appointed. These trustees represented Exeter, Usborne, Stephan and Hay townships. The by laws and regulations governing the Burial Grounds were drafted by Dickson and Carling and came into effect on April 11, 1901. The new Board began to improve the grounds. John Allison planted 134 spruce trees, farmers brought in top soil and men straightened the stones. A caretaker was hired by the new Board in 1901 and in 1902 a house was built for the caretaker. Exeter granted $200 towards the house. About this time four acres were added to the original five. In 1924 another nine and three-quarter acres were acquired.

In 1903 Council assumed full responsibility for the cemetery and has appointed a Board since that time. In that year Charles Southcott left $100 towards a permanent maintenance fund for the cemetery. This was the beginning of the perpetual care fund. The Times urged others to "follow the example of the late Mr. Southcott in providing for the proper maintenance of their burial plots".

The condition of the roads, streets and sidewalks in Exeter has probably received more discussion than any other single municipal item. It is difficult to think of another topic that has brought more abuse on to the Council than the roads. In 1875 Dr. Browning told Council to get some ducks and let the ducks "eat the mud" on the streets. Browning advised Council that it was a well-known fact that ducks ate mud. In April, 1877 the Times remarked on the condition of the streets:

> "The recent thaw and warm rains have made the streets very slushy and disagreeable and some of the crossings are almost impassable for the pedestrians, many find themselves up to their knees in water and slush."

Every spring the streets would become impassable morasses of mud. Wagons would be up to their axles in mud. The Times said "if we expect good business we must accommodate the farmers with good roads". In the summer the roads became dusty and unpleasant. The streets were in their best condition in Winter when the snow made sleigh travel comfortable. Although in winter the pitch holes did make some road areas more like roller coasters than roads. For example, in February, 1897 there were over 100 pitch holes three to four feet deep in the section of road from the river north about one mile.

Litter and filth added to the general unpleasantness of the streets. Garbage, waste, spit, manure from horses and cows accumulated. In 1904 the Advocate remarked that "the dirty, filthy practice of spitting tobacco juice on the windows and walks along Main Street is becoming altogether too common". In 1901 the Council had passed a by-law prohibiting the spitting of tobacco juice, throwing banana and orange peels, paper and other litter on the walks and roads. The WCTU asked Council to stop the practice

of spitting on the walks but Council was unable to prevent the expectoration of the rich brownish-yellow streams that stained walks and windows. In 1937 the Times-Advocate urged each person to look after his frontage and clean up the litter and to "jack up the local council" to clean up the streets. It is interesting to note that the editorial did not suggest that people should not put the garbage and litter there in the first place. In 1970 Council passed an anti-litter by-law but people are still littering.

Construction of some of the early sidewalks in Exeter. This picture was taken at the corner of John and Andrew Streets about 1900. Some of the people are: The boy is a Baskerville. George Sanders (first left), Sid Sanders (third left), Dick Seldon (rear Left), Tommy Brock (with the beard), Dr. Sweet and Flossie Sweet (in doorway), Eli Snell (white shirt and black hat in centre), Frank Mallett (hat tipped back, standing), Wes Bissett (black coat), Isaac Carling (rear, smoking pipe), Harry Jennings (with cap in front of Carling), Tom Creech (to the right and rear of Bissett), Walter Westcott (leaning on the stone hammer), Sam Sanders (stripped shirt), Al Bissett (on wagon), Sid West (far right on wagon).

Council has talked about permanent roads for the past 60 years. Main Street was the first street to be permanently surfaced and this was done in 1920 when a concrete pavement was laid 36 feet wide in the business section and 24 feet wide elsewhere. The contractor was Hollingsworth of Hamilton and the price was $41,566 with the town supplying the gravel and the roller. With the concrete surface the mud and dust problem was eliminated from the Main Street. The annual gravelling and stonebreaking on Main Street was no longer necessary. Since the very early years men would each spring dump gravel on the Main Street and proceed to break up the larger stones with stone hammers. The road work was done under the direction of the Road Commissioner. Various men

held this position over the years Isaac Whitlock Anthony Holland E R Bissett Richard Pincombe, W J Bissett, were some Labourers like Charles Baskerville, and Silas Handford and Walter Westcott were hired casually They broke the stone with the long hammers and spread the gravel In 1911 these labourers got seventeen and one half cents per hour The teamsters drawing the gravel in their gravel boxes got 35¢ an hour The gravel box carried a yard of gravel and was dumped by removing the floor boards In the early years of this century Tom Creech supplied gravel for $3 45 a cord

Street watering kept the dust down This service was paid for on a frontage basis, by the landowners along Main Street In 1887 the charge was 8¢ per foot In 1886 the watering cart was operated by Albert Bissett for $2 50 per day In 1901 it was 13¢ per foot The work was contracted out by Council annually In 1901 Caleb Heywood did the job The water for the water wagon first came from the mill pond and later from a well near the Town Hall There was a windmill pump to provide the power at this well In later years a water line was built from the mill pond to the town hall where there was a large water storage tank The problem of dust became worse after the auto appeared The Advocate on June 10, 1915 made the following suggestion

> "That our citizens realize that the dust nuisance is a real one is emphasized by the fact that so many of the back streets have petitioned to have the streets watered and we venture the guess that if the dust is kept down on all the streets petitioned for the watering cart will have a very busy season The suggestion has been made that the town follow out the system of oiling on the streets to be watered If the town would purchase another tank car of oil this could be done and done at a saving to the town so we understand Besides this there is the saving of the roadbed One great advantage the oil has is keeping down the dust on Sundays Sunday is the day when our citizens enjoy sitting out on their lawns or verandahs and it is also a day when autos are out in numbers and on this day the water cannot keep down the dust"

But the gravelling and street watering ceased to be necessary on Main Street after 1920 and the laying of the concrete road Also in 1920 Wellington Street was paved from Main Street to the Grand Trunk Railway depot The farmers in the area contributed labour to the construction of this roadway since it was felt that they would benefit from having the road to the station surfaced

The first sidewalks in the village were of course boardwalks The initial sidewalk construction was undertaken in 1876 when boardwalks six feet wide were constructed on both sides of Main Street from Huron to Gidley Four foot walks were built from Gidley to the Lake Road and from Main Street to the Station Board crossings were also constructed across Main Street at several locations to enable pedestrians to get across the mud. Around the turn of the century "granolithic" walks were being constructed to replace the plank walks. In 1901, for example, a "granolithic walk was constructed from Huron Street to the Metropolitan Hotel corner; in addition six crossings were built. The work was done by the Royal Artificial Stone Paving Company of Guelph. Council raised the money by the sale of debentures to C. H. Sanders. More "granolithic" walks were laid in 1903 on Huron Street and Victoria Street. Cows walked in the construction area damaging the freshly laid walks and adding to the cost.

The sidewalks in 1900 were still mainly plank with some new granolithic walks. A letter to the Advocate in September 1900 illustrates the feeling of the citizens about the walks.

> "As I moved down street this morning I came across many places where the sidewalks were literally flooded with tobacco juice, melon seeds and peels, banana peels, cigar stubs and ashes, and other unsightly messes, sufficient to cause nausea or even the turning of a delicate stomach. You seem to see more of these unsightly things on Saturday night, Sunday and Monday mornings, although more or less at all times. Is this not a disgrace to our town as our ladies mop up this collection of unhealthy trash with their skirts as they move along, unless they ride a wheel or wear bloomers. It is to my mind simply abominable in the extreme. ... Think it over and see if we can't improve on this matter. I am a user of tobacco myself and I therefore know it is not necessary to stand and squirt a quart of juice in a pool on the centre of the sidewalk."

The streets were lit in the early years by gas lights. In 1884 Samuel Fanson was the lamp lighter and that year there were eight lamps in the business section which burned all night. Later on the constables took on the lamp lighting job. More is said elsewhere about the provision of street lights.

Roads continued to occupy much of Council's time. In 1928 Reeve C. B. Snell was urging the town to construct permanent roads and thereby save money over the years. Snell pointed out that during the preceding four years the village had spent $25 000 on the roads and streets. Mr. Snell felt that by debenturing funds to build permanent roads the cost would be reduced in the long run. Councils have grappled with this problem for the past 40 or 50 years and at present the town does have a number of permanently paved streets.

Much more could be said about streets and roads. A new iron bridge was built in 1888 over the Ausable. Named the "Victoria Bridge" it served the village until the winter of 1941 when it collapsed. A new bridge was erected in May of that year. We could discuss the changes on Main Street, for example, the change to angle parking with the removal of the old curbs in 1934, the new lights in 1935, the major construction and new lights in the 1960 s could all be discussed in detail but space really does not permit an extensive treatment of these projects here

In addition to the roads and the streets the other major issue that has faced Council for 100 years has been drains Drainage has been bad in Exeter because of the level land and the heavy clay soil Drains were put in on the streets to provide drainage for the cellars but flooding of basements occurred frequently Selected items illustrate this problem

March 1920

> Exeter had its own little flood that was serious enough for the time on Friday of last week The creek that runs through between James and Huron Streets went on a rampage for several hours Some who have been residents of town for many years say that it was the worst they have ever seen Mrs Pickard whose property borders the creek says she remembers once when it was as bad Just at noon the creek began to swell and it rose until the lots on either side were covered by several feet of water The stable of Dr Hyndman was flooded The water was running over the road on Andrew Street almost a foot deep Cellars on either side were filled

September 1927

> Exeter experienced a miniature flood on Saturday morning when the creek which runs through the south part of the town overflowed and flooded the property east of Main Street Water was running over the roads and pedestrian traffic was almost blocked The water crossed Main Street and people had to be taken over in autos or get their feet wet The creek that runs under the Ford Garage crosses Main Street and runs along Ann Street was not able to carry the water and it began to pile up behind the buildings on the east side of Main Street "

Similar floods occurred in 1929 1937 1950 and 1954 In February 1954 a river ran through the heart of town 300 feet wide Gordon Koch a teacher at the high school was marooned at noon at home on Ann Street and phoned H L Sturgis the principal who said ' charter a boat' but get to school Another major flood occurred in the downtown area when the creek again flooded in July, 1969 after a tremendous 3 hour rainfall The south part of the town lies in a small spillway and the creek which exists naturally here is now enclosed in a large tile through most of the town This creek in addition to flooding the south part of the village from time to time contributed to other problems It was a convenient dumping place and people threw garbage offal manure dead animals and all manner of filth into the creek It was a constant source of complaint for this reason as well as the flood danger

The provision of a major sewer system for the town was first seriously considered in 1947 when a preliminary survey indicated a cost of $150 000 In 1949 Reeve A J Sweitzer began a sewer system

with the construction of a major sewer on William Street. Little more was done, however, toward the system until the late 1950's. Finally in 1961 Council and the OWRC reached an agreement and in 1962 construction of a sanitary sewer system began. Much of the town is now serviced.

The provision of water and electricity are other important services.

The existence of a water works in Exeter dates from August, 1900. At that time a water works system "on a small scale was inaugurated for street watering purposes"; when it was tested it "worked admirably". The system consisted of a six horse power gasoline engine which was located at the river. This engine drove the pump which forced water through the main which had been installed along Main Street. The water was forced into two tanks "about sixty feet high" at the Town Hall. The pressure was "so strong that the two large tanks could be filled in less than an hour". The engine, pump, and pipes cost $2,000. In addition to watering the Main Street, which was still unpaved the Council planned to sell water to people for lawn watering and to mill owners along the way.

There is no record of any significant additions to this system until 1909. In that year Council passed a by law authorizing the borrowing of $22,000 for the purpose of building a water works. Council negotiated the purchase of "that part of the river bed and banks of the Aux Sable River known as the Mill property" from James N. Howard. Howard had operated a small power plant in the old grist mill which had formerly stood on this property. The price paid was $1,700. This property is now Riverview Park. In 1910 Water Commissioners were provided for in by-law Number 8 and in 1911 Council passed a by law setting up the procedure for the management and regulation of the Water works. There was a pumping station at the river and the water was forced to the water tower located behind the Town Hall. The purchase of the mill property had included the old dam which required considerable repair and the dam was for all intents rebuilt at this time. This storage supplied the water for the system. All of the water in the system came from the river and was not, therefore, suitable for drinking. The primary reason for installing the system was, of course, to provide fire protection for the Village. Mains were constructed along Main Street and the principal streets in the core of the Village. Gradually pipes were extended to the periphery of the village, for example, in 1915, 1060 feet of four inch main was built along Huron Street from Carling Street to the railroad. The project cost $800 and was designed to give fire protection to fifteen frame houses in the area. Sometime between 1910 and 1915 a main had been built to provide the Grand Trunk Railway with water at their Exeter yard. The

Railroad paid $300 to $450 a year for this service.

Residential properties were serviced by the system if the owner wished to install plumbing but as was mentioned the water was not drinkable. Many houses did use the service for washing, toilets if they had one, lawn watering and so on. Signs in the wash room of the Central Hotel, which was the first of Exeter's hotels to have washrooms, warned patrons not to drink the water. For drinking water each property owner, business, and hotel had to rely on their own well. It was not until the mid 1930's that potable water was available to the villagers from the municipal system. But this development will be discussed later.

Much of this early water system still exists in that some of the old cast iron mains still exist and of course the water tower in the centre of town provides a major landmark although present plans call for its removal in the near future.

The provision of electricity to the village also predates the establishment of a commission. In the 1890's and early decades of the 1900's the provision of electricity was considered as a tremendous economic development. People did not take it for granted as we do now and all sorts of developments and ideas for the use of electricity were forthcoming. The Exeter Times in its June 17, 1897 issue reported on one of these electrical ideas. A sheriff in California had produced a remarkable solution. "To light a six-roomed house for $1.00 a month by means of an electric mixture which could be sold around the streets in rubber pails as a milkman delivers milk" was the idea of this man. "He used four cells . . . in each cell were two poles of carbon and zinc, . . . the results, however, are produced by the solution which, of course, is secret . . . it will easily make his fortune," said the Times.

Meanwhile in Exeter a much more prosaic electrical development had taken place. James N. "Cap" Howard had established a power plant of modest proportions in the old grist mill that James Pickard had operated on the south bank of the Ausable River. This power plant had been established in 1890. It was a wood burning steam plant and its small generator produced enough electricity to light a few lamps along Main Street and possibly to sell to a few individuals. The details of this plant of Howard's are obscure but it seems to have operated until 1897. According to Mr. Richard Seldon some of the material from this old plant or mill was used to build the house immediately north of the store at the corner of Wellington and Main Streets.

The next phase in electric power development in Exeter came in 1897 with the establishment of the "Exeter Electric Light and Power Company Limited." This company was incorporated in August or late July of 1897 with a capitalization of $10,000. The company's charter permitted them to install and operate an electric power plant and to sell electricity in the Village of Exeter. The Exeter Times reports that the company "will purchase an entirely new plant of the latest type and will operate the most perfect system extant".

The Board of Directors of the Company included Dr. C. Lutz, who was elected President of the Company. The other Directors were E. J. Spackman, merchant; B. S. O'Neil, Frank Wood, a local butcher; and R.C.C. Tremaine, B. A. Sc. from Toronto. Tremaine seems to have been the driving force behind the venture and judging from his degree he must have been an engineer; he was to be the plant manager. The other stockholders included D. Johns, tailor; W. Bawden, contractor; R. S. Lang, H. Bishop, merchant; and R. H. Collins. Most of the shareholders were local people and they bought up the shares of the company very quickly since the stock was sold out by September 1897 a month or so after the company's formation. The company bought the Verity Plough Works building which stood at the corner of Main and Wellington Streets. The plant consisted of a General Electric 16 kw alternator and a 1 20 Royal arc machine. The circuit in the beginning was planned for six and one-half miles. The power was from "a boiler 66 x 14 with 84 x 3½" tubes and a 110 h p. Brown engine 14 x 36. This plant was installed in either late August or September after the company had been "fortunate enough in securing an excellent spring of water at the Verity building". The original plan was to generate power for 1500 incandescent lights.

The company had already been given a franchise to erect poles and string wires along the streets. The Council had also given the company a contract to provide lighting for the streets of the Village. This contract was dated August 16, 1897 and had been accepted by Council on a motion by Messers Rollins and Snell at the meeting of August 20, 1897. So during the summer of 1897 "Exeterites" watched as two hundred poles were erected and wired. This activity no doubt stimulated householders and businesses to also contract with the company. One of the first houses wired was the Pickard residence on John Street. It was up to the property owner to wire the house and make it ready to receive the connection from the company's circuit which was made under Tremaine's supervision. The Exeter Times urged "parties who intend installing the service to do so at the earliest convenience" so they would be "wired up by the time the plant is in operation".

Electricity was lighting about 350 incandescent lights by the late fall of 1897 and "a staff of workmen were busily engaged in wiring an additional 900 lights". The service was limited, as it was in most towns with steam plants, to the following hours in the summer light was available from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. and in the winter from 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. and in the evening from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. although there is some evidence that a late service to midnight was also available. The boiler was the key and it had to be kept fired; wood was used whenever it was available but it was not as plentiful as the company had hoped; railroad ties, rails from old fences and so on were used. The problem is illustrated by this reference; about 1911 Mr. Richard Seldon traded all the rail fencing from his farm just south of the village for wire and the company was happy to do this since wire was cheaper than coal. However, coal was used when wood was not available. There were many interruptions particularly during thunderstorms which, if severe enough, resulted in the closing down of the generating plant.

The Company's rates are given below as they appeared in the advertising columns of the Exeter Times. The Times felt that "prices were so low that everybody should use the system".

House Lighting

Main Hall—$3.10 per annum per 16 c.p. or 4/5¢ per night
1 parlor lamp $2.80 per annum per 16 c.p. or 7/10¢ per night
each subsequent parlor lamp $1.80

Dining room	$2.75 per annum per 16 c.p.
Kitchen	$2.75 per annum per 16 c.p.
Upstairs hall	$2.75 per annum per 16 c.p.
Spare Bedroom	$1.50 per annum per 16 c.p.
Ordinary Bedroom	$1.75 per annum per 16 c.p.
Cellar	90¢ per annum per 8 c.p.

Commercial Rates

1-5 lights	$4.50 per annum per 16 c.p.
5-10 lights	$4.40 per annum per 16 c.p.
10-15 lights	$4.25 per annum per 16 c.p.
15-20 lights	$4.10 per annum per 16 c.p.
20-25 lights	$4.00 per annum per 16 c.p.
25 plus lights	$3.90 per annum per 16 c.p.

"General practise has proved it to be more satisfactory for the consumer to own everything within his own walls. The foregoing low rates have been figured on this basis and in order to secure them the following nominal initial charges are made for wiring with lamp complete

open or cleat	$1.35 per light
concealed	$1.70 per light

The advertisement was signed
by R. C. C. Tremaine, Manager

The Exeter Electric Light and Power Company had a very successful first year of operation and in the summer of 1898 declared a dividend of 5%. The 1898 Board remained the same except for the addition of John Sweitzer in place of Frank Wood. In late 1898 Tremaine and Snell bought the controlling interest in the plant and operated it until 1915 or early 1916. The Company operated on the basis of evening and in winter, morning service only during this time. The Village bought electricity for street lights and for the Town Hall spending around $1200 a year for the service. In 1914 the Municipal Electric Bill to the Company was $1385.10. There were about 50 street lights some carbon arc lamps and some incandescent. No record exists or, at least, is known, to indicate how many private customers the company had. As far as can be determined none of the hotels purchased electric power and many stores did not. Certainly quite a few homes, especially of the prosperous members of the community had the luxury of electric light even though it was limited and of low illumination.

In 1915 the contract between the municipality was to expire and it was in late 1914 and the first half of 1915 that considerable agitation developed in Exeter and area to have the Ontario Hydro Electric Power Commission bring service to Exeter. This, of course, is what happened and Snell and Tremaine's company ceased to operate. They sold the building after the first world war to S. Cann who operated a cider mill there for some years. The building, long a landmark in Exeter with the high chimney was torn down in recent years by an agency selling a different kind of "power". The site is now occupied by a retail store of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

In any case the supply of electricity to Exeter moved into its third period of development in 1914 when the Council was in touch with Ontario Hydro. There were no developments in 1914 and in 1915 the Village Council wrote Sir Adam Beck to "lay before him the matter of hydro electricity for the municipality." The Council was not satisfied with "the way the hydro commission was working on this matter". There was some pressure on the Council which consisted of Reeve J. Taylor of the Ross-Taylor Company, B. W. F. Beavers, Dr. Roulston, J. R. Hind and Mr. Harton; the clerk-treasurer was T. B. Carling who operated the general store in addition to being clerk. The pressure referred to derived from the fact that the Electric Company's franchise expired at the end of 1915 and Council had to either secure Ontario Hydro power or renew the Company's franchise. Certainly this represented one of the most important decisions any council had faced in some time.

Exeter was not alone in agitating for hydro. The people of the area from Dashwood and Crediton east to Kirkton and Woodham

and from Hensall south to Lucan where Ontario Hydro was already providing service were anxious for the power lines to reach them St Mary s also had hydro and it was to St Marys that the area looked for leadership On February 4 1915 a meeting chaired by Dr Copeland Mayor of St Marys was held at Kirkton It was argued that the area between St Marys and Exeter was one of the finest agricultural areas in Ontario and therefore it was not reasonable that it should be without the service of Ontario Hydro The meeting also discussed the possibility of an electrified railroad line from St Marys, through Kirkton to Exeter and ultimately to the lake This was the age of interest in electrified or radial railways in Southern Ontario The London and Port Stanley Railway and the Lake Erie and Northern Railway from Kitchener to Port Dover were built around this time Narcisse Cantin of St Joseph also began talking about a Stratford to St Joseph Radial Railroad shortly after World War I as well However the Kirkton meeting heard an Ontario Hydro Engineer named Castor explain that a power line from St Marys to Exeter would "be a 13 000 volt line and carry 500 h p" It would cost $1,500 per mile, a 'step down station' would have to be built just south of Exeter at a cost of $4,000 Castor explained that the radial railroad would have to be a separate project, Ontario Hydro was not in the railroad business

In February of 1915 the Council had further correspondence with Ontario Hydro indicating progress was being made The Council continued to show interest in the St Marys to Exeter Railway and agreed to participate in an Association agitating for government subsidies for the construction of such railways In March 1915 Councillors Harton Hind and Beavers went to Toronto as part of a delegation going to see Premier Hearst seeking a provincial subsidy of $3,200 per mile for the construction of radial railroads

The Exeter Times began a campaign in the spring of 1915 to interest Exeter in Hydro In one issue it had the following item

Pertinent Hydro Questions

1 Do you want hydro?
2 Can we get it?
3 Are you working for it?
4 Will you vote for it?
5 Will you use it?
6 Will you as a citizen back the Council in going after it?
7 Would you like unsightly overhead wires in the business part of the town?
8 Do you want ornamental lights for the streets?

9 Do you want better street lights than at present?
10 Do you know what the present street lights cost?
11 Do you want 24 hour lighting service?
12 DO YOU WANT TO BOOM EXETER?

The Times continued its campaign in June 1915 in support of the Council's pending arrangements with Ontario Hydro. Certainly council supported the idea at least every indication is that B. W. F. Beavers was strongly in favour of it and he seemed to be a leading voice in Council. The Times asked the people again and again should we "connect up with hydro for twenty four hour service or grant another franchise to the Electric Light Company". It went on to say "as usual Exeter has moved slowly and cautiously. Other towns have jumped into the hydro belt and have not regretted it. This has brought hydro power all around us — north, east and south. We want hydro! We must have it. the extension of the present franchise is the only alternative and in that case the people's hands are tied during the term of the agreement. now is the time for hydro get out and boost it."

Under the heading HYDRO IS A GOOD THING the Times printed the following:

H — stands for hydro The power for all classes
Y — stands for yourself the voice of the masses
D — stands for the die that has now been cast
R — for the Reasons Why the BYLAW should PASS
O — for the OVATION when it's CARRIED AT LAST

The Times campaign was being directed at an apathetic, or at best a moderately interested populace. The Council also tried to in still some interest among the people in Hydro by meetings one such meeting was held in July of 1915 at which there was only "fair attendance". Council had asked Dr. Copeland of St. Marys to speak and he extolled the merits of Hydro. George Stanley of Lucan had also been asked to speak and he discussed the value of hydro to a community in stimulating commercial activity. he added that "Lucan would laugh in their boots" if Exeter defeated the proposed by law. Castor of Ontario Hydro explained the values of hydro and its low cost stating that "washings can be done for 15¢ a month."

The by law that Council was bringing before the people for their opinion was By Law number 14 1915. The purpose of the by law was to provide for a $20 000 debenture issue to cover the cost of the necessary plant to distribute electric power. The electric power was to be supplied from Niagara under an agreement between the Village of Exeter and the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario. All the evidence indicates that the electorate approached the vote quietly, indicating, perhaps, to both the Council and the Press that there was little interest. But when the vote was held on the by-law on July 22, 1915, 70% of the eligible voters went to the polls and there were only seven dissenting votes in the unusually "quiet election". Council passed the By-Law in August and immediately signed the agreement with Ontario Hydro. The agreement called for the village to erect new poles, new conductors and new transformers. The cost of power supplied to the town was to be $43.70 per horse power. This price was based on the village using 200 hp or at least seventy-five percent or 150 h.p. However, the village was allowed five years to reach the agreed horsepower during which time it would pay for only what it used.

The Times was elated: "Hydro may not be perfection but it is the nearest to it we can get. Hydro will make this progressive little town another link in the chain of places having white light from Niagara."

Once the agreement was signed erection of Exeter's new poles and wiring began in the fall. Street lighting was discussed and it was decided that 176 street lights would be put up: this would cost $2640 per year for the hydro power. This compared with the 55 street lights in use in 1915, of which 36 were the carbon arc type and 19 incandescent; in 1915 the village had paid the Electric Company $1550 for power for these lights. There was some interest in ornamental standards with underground cable in the business section from Anne Street to Sanders Street. In November 1915 Dr. J. W. Browning, J. G. Jones and thirty other merchants petitioned Council to put this type of street light and standard up in the business section. Council, on a motion by Hind and Harton refused to grant the petitioners wishes. As a result overhead wiring, wooden poles with somewhat ornamental fixtures went up on Main Street. Some of these old ornamental iron fixtures can still be seen on some of the back streets of the town.

Sometime in 1916 the Ontario Hydro high voltage lines reached Exeter from St. Marys. The "step down station" was built and hydro came to Exeter. Stores, hotels, houses and so on were wired for hydro if they had not already been customers of the electric company. "King" Davis and other electricians had a busy time. The number of customers climbed until by 1920 it is reported that there were between 300 and 400 customers in the village. There are however, no extant records to verify this.

With hydro in Exeter, Council under advisement from the Ontario Hydro Commission undertook to set up a public utilities commission. Until this was set up the Fire, Water and Light Committee of Council was the responsible body: this meant, of course, that

Council dealt directly with Ontario Hydro. So in 1917 the Exeter Public Utilities Commission was established and Council turned over responsibility for both water and electricity to the commission. On January 1st, 1917 two by-laws were "presented to the Electors" of the Village of Exeter for their approval. By-law number 8, 1916 was a by-law which provided for the establishment of a commission to assume responsibility for administering water and electric power services in Exeter. This responsibility had previously been part of the Village Council's duties. The by-law was approved by the voters 140 to 7. By-law number 9, 1916 was a by-law to provide for the construction of the works necessary to give full twenty-four hour a day service to the village. This was approved by the voters 129 to 9.

Consequently, Council following the wishes of the electors gave third reading to these two by-laws and delegated to a commission the responsibilities of providing the services of water and electricity. The first commissioners were in office as of January 1, 1917; they were in office by acclamation, a practice that was to become customary for the Commission since in the over fifty years of its existance the number of elections has been very small, perhaps two or three. The first commissioners were H. E. Huston, an insurance agent by profession and S. M. (Sam) Sanders one of the founders of the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company. B. W. F. Beavers by virtue of his office as Reeve was the third member of the Commission. Mr. Beavers was a merchant operating a dry goods store about where Lindenfield's Hardware is today, later he acquired the Spackman business near the corner of John and Main Streets. Huston's term was for one year and Sanders for two years as provided in the by-law. Reeve Beavers had the two men draw lots to determine the length of the terms. Huston was elected as Chairman. In April of 1917 Mr. Sanders resigned and John R. Hind, manager of the Ross-Taylor Company lumber yard which was located where The Beaver Lumber Company's yard is now, was appointed to take Sanders place. Hind served on the Commission for eleven years.

The men that Council periodically engaged to run the small waterworks were henceforth engaged by the Commission. Herman W. Doerr, an electrician, had sometime before 1917 been engaged by Council and in 1917 he became the manager of the waterworks and hydro service for the commission, his salary at this time was $70.00 per month.

When the Commission assumed administrative responsibility the village was almost half-way toward its 200 h.p. agreement. In February, 1917 the billing by Ontario Hydro was for 80.4 h.p. and the Commission paid $279.12 for the month, as now, billings were based on peak load which occurred at 8.15 p.m. at this particular time.

The early years of the Commission did not see any great expansion of the waterworks system. The primary job in this department was maintenance of the existing system and minor periodic extensions. But Exeter did not expand much at this time so little additional main was necessary. In the hydro department the commission's crew which varied in size and in members constructed the lines and so on to the various parts of the town. Hydro power was delivered, for example, to the canning factory and to the other peripheral areas of the village. Not only did the Commission administer Exeter but also undertook in its first couple of years to administer the hydro facilities in Dashwood, Zurich and in 1923 the immediate rural area. This rural system had 130 customers. Once a month H. W. Doerr and, when he was hired in 1921, R. E. Russell would go to Dashwood and Zurich to read meters, render accounts, do the bookkeeping and make installations. The police village of Dashwood agreed to pay the Commission $150 per year for this supervisory service plus the costs of any installations made by the commission. The amount Zurich paid was probably somewhat higher. Mr. Doerr received an extra $8.00 per month in addition to his salary of $940 per year which he received as the Commission's Superintendent and Secretary. The Exeter Public Utilities Commission provided this service to these other communities for some years until the rural hydro division of Ontario Hydro was established in this area.

In these early years of hydro in Ontario there seemed to be a close affinity between local commissions and the Ontario Commission. One illustration of this relationship is exhibited by the following letter dated October 19, 1921 and addressed to Sir Adam Beck from the local commission:

> Dear Sir,
>
> It is with mingled feelings of sorrow and regret that we have learned of the sad bereavement you have suffered in the loss of your esteemed and much loved partner the late Lady Beck.
>
> If words could express our feelings, we could in a measure tell you of our deepest sympathy for you at this time, but words fail.
>
> We wish to extend to you our deepest expressions of sympathy and trust that you may receive strength from our Maker to bear you through this, your greatest loss.
>
> signed John Hind
> Chairman

The Commission met in the Library in its early years since it did not have any building under its jurisdiction. Electric and water accounts could be paid at the office of T. G. Creech the express agent. Mr. Creech received some small remuneration for this ser-

vice. A few years later the building previously used as a harness shop by P. Frayne and M. Quance on Main Street served as the Commission's office and shop. The Waterworks and Hydro department payroll in the 1920's and early 1930's included from time to time various part time or casual labourers as well as the small permanent staff. Such names as R. E. Russell and W. Lutman were among those employed. Lutman was the only employee in the history of the Commission to die on the job by electrocution. He was killed in 1931. E. "King" Davis, A. Kernick, B. Cunningham, John Norry, Thomas Welsh, James Parsons, Leo Hennessey, Harry Lewis, Elmer Reeder, Archie Ireland, Dewey Ward, Ed Sims, C. B. Carruthers and many others were also employed over the years. Ross Dearing who was office clerk was the only female employee prior to the mid 1930's.

As has been mentioned from 1917 to 1934 the Commission did not undertake any major waterworks construction but in the 1930's it was becoming apparent that something had to be undertaken by way of a potable water supply. In 1934 the Chamber of Commerce petitioned the Village Council to undertake an examination of the feasibility of installing a potable, domestic water system. Evidently men like L. J. Penhale, manager of the canning factory, was very interested in a water supply. Albert Traquair and other prominent citizens were strongly urging provision of a domestic water supply. Many people, however, had no interest in the scheme since they had good wells. In March 1934 "an informal meeting of a number of representative ratepayers was held in the Exeter Library ... and the following resolution was adopted on a motion by B. W. F. Beavers and B. M. Francis

> "that this meeting request the Municipal Council to take the necessary steps to secure available information as to the cost of installing a suitable system of drinking water for the Village of Exeter"

The Council referred this to the Commission. This Commission engaged the services of D. H. Fleming, a Toronto consultant. The Council agreed to hold a vote on the debenture by law for the waterworks extension and improvement. This vote went 246 for and 96 against. The situation regarding water in Exeter at this time was one of increasing seriousness. Individual wells upon which people depended for their drinking water were becoming polluted from weeping tile. In several homes it was necessary to boil well water before using it. The river water which was in the village water system was not fit to drink.

Test drilling commenced in June 1934. Considerable interest was shown in a well on the property of W. F. Abbott. A test well was dug at this site on Marlborough Street and this well provided

potable water. It did not however become a producing well for several years.

In 1936 land and springs on the farm of Mr. Garnet Frayne were obtained and rights of way for a 6 inch pipe line to the old pump house at the river also were obtained through the properties involved which were owned by Messers Frayne, Yellow and Dow. A reservoir was built near the old pumphouse with a capacity of 250 000 IG to receive the water from the springs where a motor and pump were installed to pump the water to the reservoir. The interior of the old water tower which was erected in 1909 was also cleaned and painted. In 1937 the old pumphouse at the river was sold and removed and the present pumphouse constructed. By 1939 a large part of the village was receiving a supply of drinking water from the Abbott well which evidently turned out to be on the road allowance rather than on his property as was originally thought and from the springs on the Frayne farm.

In March 1937 the Commission set rates as follows:

Private Dwellings one or more taps	$ 6.00
with bath	3.00
with toilet	3.00
Public Garages washing cars	25.00
not washing cars	12.00
Bakeshops	9.00
Dentist office	9.00
Doctor's office	9.00
Barber shop	9.00
Theatres with toilets	15.00
Butcher shop	9.00
Stores	9.00
Creamery	75.00
School	100.00
Huron Lumber Co	25.00
Flax Mill	20.00
Chopping Mill	25.00
V. Cann	200.00
Green House	20.00
Hotel	60.00
Bowling Green	35.00
Arena	50.00
CNR	250.00
Canadian Canners	350.00
Hydrant	40.00
Tank of Water (Cash)	1.00

The total cost of this improvement and construction was $35,000.

Another major commission undertaking in the 1930's was the erection on Main Street of cast iron "ornamental street light standards" with underground wiring. These replaced the lights that had served Main Street for the previous twenty years. These lights con tinued in use until 1966 when the present concrete poles with the fluorescent lights replaced them

By 1940 the waterworks consisted of the domestic system and the river supply There were two sources of domestic water being tapped that is the Abbott Well on Marlborough Street and the springs on the Frayne farm This water was collected at the resevoir near the dam and pumped to the system The river supply was used only by the Canadian Canners for cooling purposes at this time In 1939 the Commission was serving 308 domestic customers 66 commercial customers and 5 industrial customers for water By 1946 these figures were 531 85 and 4 respectively Ten years later in 1956 there were 890 domestic customers 135 commercial and 8 industrial The present figures are approximately 1 100 140 and 15

During the war years almost no water main extension or improvement to the waterworks was undertaken The period 1945 to 1950 however saw several important developments During this time a third well namely the Kestle Well just south of town was brought in to production in 1945 This well was never used very extensively since poor tests were obtained and its use was discontinued within a few years In 1949 a major addition to the water system was completed In that year the Moodie Well began to contribute water to the village supply The cost of the 50 foot well the three miles of six inch main from the well to the Village system and other works cost $48 000

In 1960 the Commission added a fourth well when it sank the Hicks Well primarily as a stand-by or as an extra supply of water for dry periods The table below summarizes the domestic sources of water that the Commission has

WELL	GALLONAGE	DISTANCE
Frayne Springs	75 million	1 mile of 6" main
Marlborough Street Well	2 6 million	
Moodie Well	37 5 million	3 miles of 6" main
Hicks Well	8 million	1¾ miles of 6" main

The Frayne Springs source is the only water in the system that is treated in any way and chlorination of this supply began in 1966

The major waterworks job undertaken by the Commission during the post war period was, of course the sharing and participation in the Morrison Dam project For some years prior to 1958 when the dam was completed there had been considerable concern over the shortage of water in Exeter In 1954 the Canadian Canners, Council, and the Commission discussed the water supply problem The Canning Factory had for years drawn water from the local dam this had been done using a pump and engine which were set up at the dam The water was carried to the factory in an above ground pipe All of this equipment including the pipe were there only during the canning season In 1955 the Commission built an 8 inch cast iron main from the local dam to the Canadian Canners plant The pump engine and small chlorinator were set up temporarily at the dam 1955 was the first year that the Commission sold river water to the Canadian Canners Before that the Canning factory had apparently operated the system In 1955 the Commission sold 4 million Imperial Gallons of river water to the Canning factory

But, as indicated the Canadian Canners considered that the potential supply in the local dam was inadequate and felt the town and the commission should do something to relieve this shortage There was considerable discussion in 1954 and 1955 that the town and the Canadian Canners had some kind of agreement that if a guaranteed water supply were forthcoming the Company would undertake expansion of the Exeter plant However in 1955 Mayor R E Pooley said that "the town never had a written agreement with the company it was a verbal understanding that if the Town secured an adequate water supply a sizeable addition would be erected" at the local plant The mayor went on to say that a company official had assured the town that the company would still expand the factory if the supply of water from the proposed dam materialized At the same meeting Reeve MacKenzie said that the purchase of Canadian Canners by the California Packing Company "makes our obligation to supply water even larger than before

The Morrison Dam project was quite a controversial issue at the time The Ausable Authority under whose jurisdiction the dam would be built was enthusiastic about the idea since a dam somewhere in this area had been recommended in the 1949 Authority report Andrew Dixon, John Morrison and other members of the Authority urged its construction since it would provide a reservoir to store water for the low flow period and help control spring run off, it would also provide a recreational area of some merit The Council and the Commission supported the dam's construction for other reasons, both bodies wished to secure the water supply that would be available for the Canning factory since it represented Exeter's principal industrial activity

Not everyone, however supported the project in fact, a majority of the people of Exeter probably opposed the dam In order to avoid delays the Council requested that the Municipal Board hold a hearing to determine whether or not a vote should be held on the proposal At the hearing representatives of the Authority, the Council and the Commission spoke Authority Chairman J A Morrison urged its construction for conservation purposes, C V Pickard Town Clerk said "the town gets five or six inquiries a year from industries wishing to locate but several have been turned away because of the shortage of water in town'. He felt Exeter should do everything possible to secure more industrial and commercial activity to balance the disproportionately large residential assessment that the town had. W. G. Cochrane expressed his feeling that the dam represented Exeter's only answer to the water shortage problem. K. J. Lampman the Commission's manager pointed out that the Commission realized it would probably have to build a chlorinating and filtering plant. The Municipal Board ruled shortly after that no vote was required and the Council, Commission and the Authority which was the actual agency responsible for undertaking the work proceeded with the plans. The details, problems, price changes, tendering problems and so on occupied considerable time and cannot be gone into here. It is enough for our purposes to say that finally in 1957 the contract was awarded to the Pearce Construction Company of Hagersville who had submitted the lowest tender of $168,000; there were three other bids, considerably higher. The dam itself was finished in 1958 and named the John A. Morrison Dam in honour of the Authority Chairman. The dam provided a storage capacity of fifty million gallons and when the stop logs were added an additional fifteen million gallons could be stored. This sixty five million gallons plus the local dam's five million gallons gives the Commission a source of some seventy million gallons to provide to the canning factory. With this source the factory's consumption increased from 2.5 million gallons in 1957 to 15 million gallons in 1960. In the years 1961 to 1972 the consumption has varied from 30 million gallons to 59 million gallons per year.

The cost of the dam was divided as follows:

1	Usborne Township	$18,000
2	Various government grants	90,600
3	General municipal levy	9,060
4	Public Utilities Commission	81,540

This represented the largest single expenditure in the Commission's history. So after years of debate the dam was a reality. The objectors must admit now that a fine winter and summer outdoor recreation area has been provided and the Commission has increased its supply of water for non-domestic purposes. In 1961 the Commission constructed a chlorinating and filtration plant at the river to handle up to 600 gallons per minute of river water. This represented another major expenditure in the Commission's efforts to supply the Canadian Canners with the water they required. It should also be remembered that the factory also is supplied with large gallonages of domestic water as well.

Other water works department undertakings in the recent years included main replacements and major extensions. Among these major extensions was an eight inch main to the north end of the town. This was done in 1964 following a fire in that part of town. It is interesting to note that the Fire Underwriters Association had repeatedly criticized the Commission in the 1920's and 1930's for the very inadequate fire protection in the north part of the town.

At the present time, then, the Commission operates a water works department which, through nearly fifteen miles of main, supplies annually to all types of consumers up to 180 million gallons of water. This includes some 40 million gallons on the average from the river supply.

In the hydro department the Commission was able to do very little during the war years. In 1940 the number of hydro customers would have been about 400. The rates paid in 1940 included those given below:

domestic	3¢ per kwh for the first 60 hours and 9¢ per kwh for over 60 hours. The minimum bill was about 83¢.

Flat rate water heaters were 44¢ per 100 watts per month. The Ontario Hydro rates to the commission in 1940 were $34.50 per horse power per year. It will be remembered that this was about $10.00 lower than when Ontario Hydro first began supplying electricity in 1916.

Even after the war very little hydro work was done by the Commission aside from a few new services and some line replacement. The largest number of services installed would have been in 1947 when the war time housing area was serviced. This minimal amount of work in the hydro department was characteristic actually until 1958. It should be remembered, however, that the Commission did not have a staff until 1958. The only employees the Commission had were two office staff and Mr. K. J. Lampman who was the Ontario Hydro divisional manager; he doubled as Commission manager until 1958. Mr. Leo Hennessey, an Ontario Hydro employee as well, who was on what amounted to permanent loan to the Commission. This lack of staff was an important reason why the Commission did not undertake any extensive hydro works at this time.

In 1958 a major step was taken by the Commission. The present manager Mr. Hugh Davis was hired and a staff of linemen and ground men were engaged. Mr. M. Keating was taken on as foreman in 1958 as well. Thus the bulk of the work done in the hydro department during the last thirty years has been done since 1958. This work includes a very large amount of line and pole

replacement, the Commission now has $200,000 invested in this part of its plant. Transformers were added, the water heater control unit costing $13,000 was installed in an effort to control peak load. The office procedure was modernized and generally speaking under Mr. Davis' management the Commission has moved to modernize its operations.

In street lighting, too, considerable progress has been made since 1958. In 1958 there were 247 street lights in Exeter with a load of about 33 kilowatts; the investment was something over $5,000. There are now about 350 street lights with a kilowattage of about 59, and the street light plant is valued at $25,000; this figure, it should be noted, does not include the new fluorescent street lights on Main Street which were installed by the Commission at the request of the Council in 1966. These replaced the ornamental standards that had been installed in 1935. It is interesting to recall that in 1915 the village of Exeter had paid the Electric Light Company some $1,550 for lighting 55 street lights of very low illumination. In 1965 the Town paid the Commission $6,500 for lighting 330 lights of much greater illumination.

At present consumers in Exeter average a consumption of about 625 kilowatt hours per month. This is very high when compared to similar communities indicating presumably that the average Exeter household uses many appliances. For its electricity the consumer in Exeter pays about $6.75 per 500 kwh per month. There are some 1300 consumers of electricity now being served by the Commission. Perhaps it should be noted that the Commission is faced with buying its hydro from the H.E.P.C. at a rate much higher than other nearby towns. Exeter's Commission in 1967 paid $44.62 per kw per year. Seaforth paid $36.92 and Clinton $42.77. The figures are proportionately still the same.

In addition to modernization of the hydro plant the Commission also modernized its equipment and storage facilities since 1958. New vehicles were purchased and a new warehouse was erected behind the Commission's building on Main Street. This building occupied by the Commission on Main Street was, incidentally, acquired by the Commission on July 31, 1943 when it was purchased from the Bank of Montreal. It will be recalled that before being occupied by the Bank of Montreal it had been Molson's Bank.

Recent work by the Commission has included reconstruction of the power line along Main Street. The first stage of this was done in 1967 and stage two was undertaken shortly thereafter from the river to the north limits of the Town. This work removed the unsightly lines from the street since the line was built along the rear lot lines of the properties along Main Street. Concrete standards and fluorescent lights like those in the business section were extended

along the whole of Main Street

Obviously, then, the present and future commissions have much important work to do. It is to be hoped that Exeter will continue to have men of integrity with a devotion to public service acting as members of the Commission that provides the Town with the basic services of water and electricity.

The Members of the
Exeter Public Utilities Commission

1917

H E Huston chairman
S M Sanders
B W F Beavers - Reeve
J R Hind replaced Mr Sanders in April 1917

1924

J R. Hind chairman
H E Huston
W D Sanders Reeve

1926

J R Hind chairman
William Ward
C B Snell Reeve

1929

William Ward chairman
P Coates
C.B Snell Reeve

1930

Wm Ward chairman
P Coates
B M Francis Reeve

1934

P Coates chairman
Wm Ward
W D Sanders - Reeve

1935

L.J Penhale - chairman
Wm Ward
Thos Pryde - Reeve

1937

L.J Penhale chairman
Wm Ward
W D Sanders - Reeve

1940

L J Penhale chairman
Thos Pryde
B W Tuckey - Reeve

1945

L J Penhale
H C Rivers
B W Tuckey - Reeve

1949

H C Rivers chairman
L.J Penhale - chairman
A J Sweitzer Reeve

1951

L.J Penhale - chairman
H C Rivers
B.W Tuckey Mayor

1952

L.J Penhale chairman
H C Rivers
Wm Cochrane - Mayor

1955

L.J Penhale chairman
H C Rivers
R E. Pooley - Mayor

1956

L J Penhale chairman
H C Rivers
R E Pooley - Mayor
Wm Cochrane replaced Mr Rivers in May 1956

1957

L J Penhale chairman
Wm Cochrane
R.E. Pooley - Mayor

1961

Wm Cochrane chairman
L.J Penhale
R.E Pooley - Mayor

1962

Wm Cochrane chairman
R E Pooley
E Simmons Mayor

1963

R E Pooley — chairman
M Greene
E Simmons — Mayor

1965

R E. Pooley — chairman
M Greene
J H W Delbridge — Mayor

1967

R E. Pooley — chairman
M Greene
J H W Delbridge — Mayor

Secretaries and Treasurers of the Exeter Public Utilities Commission

S M Sanders
I Senior
H W Doerr

Rosa Dearing
K J Lampman
Dorothy Davis

Managers of the Exeter Public Utilities Commission

H W Doerr — 1917-1934
Leo Hennessey — 1934

K J Lampman - 1935-1958
Hugh Davis — 1958-

Exeter was incorporated as a village in 1873 In 1857 the village had perhaps 300 people by 1861 there may have been 500 and by 1873 the population was approaching 1000 By the early 1890 s the population was almost 2000 and this marked the highest population the village attained until after World War Two In 1947 the population was 1980 and in 1949 2364 In 1921 there were only 1442 people a drop of nearly 600 in 30 years In 1961 the population reached 3000 and it has continued to grow but quite slowly

Statistics for the years are available but they serve little purpose in this type of book As an illustration the vital statistics for 1878 are given below

Births — 64
Marriages — 16
Deaths — 28
Consumption — 4
Convulsions — 2
Heart — 2
Apoplexy — 1
Gangrene of the lungs — 1
Inflammation of the lungs — 2
Inflammation of the bowels — 1
Purpura Hemorragica — 1

Brain fever — 1
Cancer — stomach — 1
Jaundice — 1
Sunstroke — 1
Cyanosis — 1
Inanition — 2
Summer complaint — 2
Typhoid — 2
Bronchitis — 2
Unknown - 1

By way of comparison in 1971 there were 153 births, 60 deaths and 64 marriages.

In 1878 the average age of the village population was 28. The oldest person was 76.

In 1950 with a population of 2609 the village of Exeter applied to the Ontario Municipal Board to change its status from a village to a town. The change was official on New Years Day, 1951.

There are many other aspects of municipal history that could be mentioned. The construction of about 50 wartime housing units in 1947 and 1948 caused some stir in the municipality. S. M. Sanders charged the Council with "tyranny" because no vote was held to approve the $16,000 debenture that was involved. The changing tax rate would make an interesting study; the establishment of a Planning Board, the expansion of the town eastwards with new subdivisions is another feature of the town's changing geography. These are other aspects of municipal history that cannot be examined here.

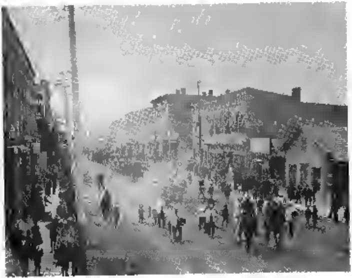
As we noted at the beginning, Ontario's communities have fortunately had persons who have been willing to serve their municipality as councillors and members of various boards and commissions. There were times in Exeter when the numbers who were willing to serve on Council were few but eventually someone always came forward who was willing to do the job of governing the corporation.

William H. Verity "the Plow King" and Family

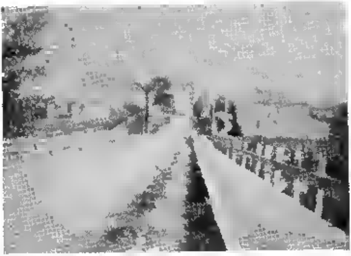
The first building is the Molson's Bank. The second is Drew's Undertaking establishment. This picture dates from the 1880's. Dinney Furniture occupies both buildings now.

Stewart's "Big Bankrupt Store"

The Presbyterian Church about 1885



Squire Leathorne Leading a Parade in the 1880's



Looking south along Main Street
Note the board walk and the old bridge

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Clarence Derry Boyle

Nicholas Dyer Hurdon manager of Molson's Bank and community leader in the late 1800's and early 1900's

First Hockey Provincial Champions — Exeter Jr. Hawks — 1971-72

chapter 10

Politics in Exeter

They were all Conservatives and had been for years and years

(Leacock s Sunshine Sketches)

Everybody in Mariposa was either Liberal or Conservative", but in Exeter they were mostly Conservative Indeed, they were mostly Conservative! Exeter is one of those consistent communities when it comes to politics in every single Dominion election since Confederation, Exeter has voted for the Conservative candidate. In every provincial election except two, Exeter has voted Conservative The two exceptions were the years 1926 and 1929 when a majority of voters in Exeter cast their ballots for W G Medd the Progressive candidate Mr Medd was a popular Exeter businessman and this more than his politics caused the departure from tradition. Exeter, then has an almost one hundred percent perfect record as Emerson remarked "consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds", politically Exeter obviously must have many great political minds

Before Confederation Exeter formed part of the adjacent townships and the townships in turn formed part of the District of Huron The first parliamentary election affecting Huron was in

1835 in that election Captain Robert Graham Dunlop a Tory defeated the Reform candidate Colonel Anthony Van Egmond. Willis and McConnell would have been the only people living in what is now Exeter and few more joined them for some time. After the 1841 Act of Union created the Province of Canada, the new District of Huron was formed on October 14 1841 The Huron District included the present Counties of Huron, Perth, and Bruce and the townships of Biddulph and McGillivray Goderich was the District seat

The Rebellion of 1837 had little direct effect on the Exeter area since there were so few people here anyway Generally speaking, Huron was Tory and thus against the rebels The only reference to the Exeter area notes that a Capt Longworth of the Canada Company went to London He sent back word to a Dr Hamilton in Goderich to bring twelve men to London for guard duty The twelve men set out and "where Exeter now is, the twelve men and the Doctor halted and spent the night clustered around a fire listening to the wolves howling in their host s yards" Louis Holman Richard Handford and others joined Capt. Longworth and twenty other men and left to fight the rebels

In the election of 1841 Dr William 'Tiger Dunlop, a brother of the Captain, eventually won the seat He had to petition the government, however, to win since his opponent James Magill Strahan the Reform candidate had won the election Dunlop s charges of irregularity convinced the three lawyers sent from Toronto as the election court and he took his seat as the District s first representative in the legislature at Kingston on June 13 1842 The hearings were held in Rattenbury s Hotel and took 14 days As it became apparent that Dunlop would win 'the Tiger s red whiskers grew redder for joy Evidently the people in the Usborne area had voted for Dunlop beginning the Exeter area's Tory traditions The Huron District elected Tory William Cayley in 1844 and 1853 In 1851 Reformer Malcolm Cameron defeated Cayley In 1857 John Holmes, a Reform candidate won over Cayley In 1861 James Dickson defeated Cayley and Dickson represented the District until Confederation

Since Confederation, Exeter has been located in four different federal ridings From 1867 to 1882 Exeter was in the Huron South riding from 1882 to 1904 the Village, along with neighbouring Stephen Township formed part of the Middlesex North riding After this Exeter was again part of Huron South until 1940 In 1940 the Huron-Perth riding was created and Exeter formed part of this riding until 1953 In that year the present Huron constituency was formed In all of these constituencies, regardless of who the candidates were, Exeter voted solidly Conservative Through wars,

rebellions, depressions and prosperity Exeter stood firm.

Throughout "Upper Canada" politics played a major part in giving the rural and small town areas a periodic sense of excitement. Politics has been regarded somewhat ambivalently by us "Upper Canadians". On the one hand it was taken very seriously as witnessed by the degree of corruption, bribery and shady election practices which would appall us today. The serious view of politics may also be noted in the fact that we prayed, and indeed, still do for our political leaders. The Book of Common Prayer has many prayers "for those placed in authority over us"; we ask for guidance and direction "to elect fit persons to serve" in political office. There is a story, probably apocryphal, about a Methodist prayer meeting in Exeter in 1870 or 1871 during the Riel trouble in Manitoba. The prayer leader referred to these troubles saying "Oh Lord, if the government is to blame, remove it". At this, an old Grit called out, "there is no if about it, Lord, Thou knowest well enough it is to blame". With this utterance all of the Tories present groaned and the Grits all said Amen!

But at the same time that serious concern was given to the men who were to be elected and close attention paid to legislation Upper Canadians also viewed politics and elections as occasions for fun and amusement. People in the rural areas and small towns had an opportunity, in the early days at least, to see famous politicians including Prime Ministers and the great political orators. These face-to-face meetings, discussions and personal confrontations gave the voters a feeling of close involvement and participation. Today news and politics has been "cut down into a commodity by the mass media, a staccato piece of show business". In the past, certainly in the small towns of Ontario the local member was widely known and many people had personally seen and quite possibly talked with the Prime Minister. Exeter's citizens, for example, had a fairly extended visit from Alexander Mackenzie, Canada's second Prime Minister. Mackenzie stayed in the Gidley home during his visit in Exeter. (This house, incidentally is now the Douglas Gould residence on William Street.) Sir Charles Tupper, who was Prime Minister for a brief period in 1896 stopped in Exeter for half a day. Mackenzie King visited here several times. Sir Wilfred Laurier, R. B. Bennett, Louis St. Laurent, Lester Pearson, John Diefenbaker all visited in Exeter for brief periods. All of them, were not, however, Prime Ministers at the time of their visits. Mackenzie King, for example, was Minister of Labor, Leader of the Opposition, and Prime Minister when he visited Exeter; during his visits he stayed with Major Heaman and later in the same house when it was owned by Albert Traquair. (This house is now owned by Kenneth Johns.) These comments are made merely to illustrate the personal nature of small town Ontario's politics.

The following section of Exeter's history, then, provides some details of Exeter's political history as related to the Dominion or federal politics. The chart below shows the various candidates and provides other information in summary form.

Election year	Riding in which Exeter located	Candidates	Winning Candidates	Party forming Government	Exeter's member in opposition or on Government side
1867	Huron South	M C Cameron(L) J Ritchie(C) Sills(?)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1872	Huron South	M C Cameron(L) T Greenway(C)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1874	Huron South	M C Cameron(L) T Greenway(C)	Cameron	Liberal	Government
1875	Huron South	T.Greenway(?)	Greenway	Liberal	Independent
1878	Huron South	M C Cameron(L) R Porter(C)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1882	North Middlesex	T Coughlin(C) L E Shipley(L)	Coughlin	Conservative	Government
1887	North Middlesex	T Coughlin(C) L E Shipley(L)	Coughlin	Conservative	Government
1891	North Middlesex	Hutchins(C) Taylor(L)	Hutchins	Conservative	Government
1896	North Middlesex	Hutchins (C) V Ratz(L)	Hutchins	Liberal	Opposition
1900	North Middlesex	J Sherritt(C) V Ratz(L)	Sherritt	Liberal	Opposition
1904	Huron South	B B Gunn(C) T Fraser(L)	Gunn	Liberal	Opposition
1908	Huron South (by-election)	M Y McLean(L) H Horton(C)	McLean	Liberal	Government
1908	Huron South	M Y McLean(L) J.Sherritt(C)	McLean	Liberal	Government
1911	Huron South	M Y McLean(L) J.J Merner(C)	Merner	Conservative	Government
1917	Huron South	J J Merner(C) T McMillan(L)	Merner	Conservative (war coalition)	Government
1921	Huron South	Black(?) T McMillan(L) J J Merner(C)	Black	Liberal	Opposition
1925	Huron South	T McMillan(L) R McMillan(P) J.J Merner(C)	McMillan	Liberal	Government
1926	Huron South	T McMillan(L) A Hicks(C)	McMillan	Liberal	Government
1930	Huron South	T McMillan(L) N Trewartha(C)	McMillan	Conservative	Opposition
1932	Huron South (by-election)	W Golding(L) L Rader(C)	Golding	Conservative	Opposition

1935	Huron Perth	Donnelly(C) W Golding(L) R McMillan	Golding	Liberal	Government
1940	Huron Perth	W Golding(L) J Morley(C)	Golding	Liberal	Government
1945	Huron Perth	W Golding(L) T Pryde(C) G Caen(CCF)	Golding	Liberal	Government
1949	Huron Perth	A Y McLean(L) E.McKinley(C) J R Peters(CCF)	McLean	Liberal	Government
1953	Huron	A Y McLean(L) E Cardiff(C)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1957	Huron	A Y McLean(L) E.Cardiff(C)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1958	Huron	E.Cardiff(C) W Cochrane(L)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1962	Huron	E.Cardiff(C) E Fisher(L) C.Hemingway(CCF) E Douglas(SC)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1963	Huron	E.Cardiff(C) G McGavin(L)	Cardiff	Liberal	Opposition
1965	Huron	R E McKinley(C) M Edgar(L)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition
1968	Huron	R E.McKinley(C) M Edgar(L)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition
1972	Huron	R.E McKinley(C) C Thomas(L) S Weary(NDP) E Bain(I)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition

As can be seen from the table the politics of South Huron were dominated during the period from Confederation to the 1880's by a gentleman who liked to style himself as "Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq Q C " Cameron was a Reformer i.e., a Liberal and Exeter was represented by him in Ottawa from 1867 to 1882 except for the period 1875 1878 when Thomas Greenway represented the area

In 1867 Cameron defeated the Conservative candidate Ritchie Sir John A MacDonald's government gerrymandered Huron in 1871 hoping to secure Conservative victories in at least two of the three ridings created in Huron The gerrymander drew heavy criticism in the House with Mr Rymal of Wentworth using most picturesque language as he attacked the government The gerrymander did not bother Cameron since he won again in the 1872 election and again in 1874. The Tories lost the 1874 "Pacific Scandal" election and Exeter was represented for the first time on the government side of the House. There was to be trouble, however, over the 1874 election, local Tories protested Cameron's victory

This period i e the 1870's was one of confusing and sometimes violent political activity in South Huron Because of the confusion the period is one of the most interesting in the history of federal politics in South Huron, consequently it will be dealt with more fully than some of the other periods.

Alexander Mackenzie, then Prime Minister, called an election in 1874. The South Huron Tories moved to make plans. Exeter men such as Benjamin Valeck Elliott and Isaac Carling were important figures in the local Conservative organization. These men with their fellow Tories met in Dixon's Hotel in Brucefield on the 9th of January, 1874 to discuss the coming election. Elliott and Carling were very critical of Mackenzie for calling the election and putting the country to such "unnecessary expense". Nevertheless, they were hopeful of a Conservative victory in South Huron. The general feeling was that Cameron could be beaten. "it was a well known fact that Mr. Cameron had lost a good deal of his influence" because of his "debauchery of the people" at the previous election. The "Times" of Exeter said that Cameron had been elected in 1872 "by the grossest acts of corruption and by the most outrageous violation of law and the constitution". The good editor of the "Times" went on to speak so strongly as to suggest that Cameron had "polluted and dragged through the very depths of corruption" the South Huron constituency. He used means "at once most foul and disreputable". These comments from the "Times" represented the feeling of the Exeter and South Huron Tories and with much hope they nominated Thomas Greenway to contest the election against Cameron. A short time after the Brucefield meeting the Conservative planners met in Exeter's old Union Hotel to organize the campaign. The "Times" remarked that the political morality of the Government was so low that only the return of Sir John would solve the country's ills. The Reform Party was "impure and corrupt".

The strong Conservative campaign failed to unseat the seemingly unbeatable Cameron. The "Times" moaned "O wretched hour that finds me thus"; not only had South Huron elected a Liberal but the country had returned Mackenzie's Liberal government. But, harkened the "Times", "take heart", there was hope. Cameron's election would be protested. Cameron had spent "money in unlimited quantities", his agents "had scattered money and whiskey throughout the riding". "Proof of corruption was overwhelming". Not only had money and whiskey poured forth but a "gang of roughs from London" had been hired by Cameron to intimidate the voters. Such accusations as the above filled the pages of the Exeter Times which also charged that Mr. Gibbons, the Returning Officer, had campaigned against Greenway. So the Tories launched a protest against Cameron who proceeded with attempts to protect himself on all sides. He presented a bill to redivide Huron, in his favour of course, by moving various polls and townships from one Huron riding to the other. The Senate suppressed the bill and thereby suppressed "the dangerous principle of allowing any member of the Commons whose return has been petitioned against to make a riding to suit himself".

Cameron was also suspected of suggesting to some Bayfield Conservatives that they work on the possibility of getting the Conservatives of South Huron to withdraw the protest against his election. Cameron is supposed to have promised to increase the government grant to Bayfield Harbour from $30,000 to $60,000. The Goderich Signal and the Seaforth paper denied that Cameron did anything wrong but the Exeter Times said "Cameron sinks lower".

The protest continued despite efforts to have it withdrawn and Cameron was brought to trial before an election court; he was found guilty of unlawful expenditures of funds. He escaped personal disqualification, but he was nevertheless unseated and a new election was called for early 1875. The Times was naturally ecstatic. The editor of Exeter's weekly suggested that "the trial so convinced the people of Cameron's duplicity ... that they delight in elevating their noses when they hear him approach, scenting him from afar ... Many who voted for him have so felt the anguish of conscience at having assisted in his election that they express themselves as willing and anxious to work against him in the future". The Times also said that the price paid for a vote by Cameron's boys was either $8.00 or a jug of whiskey and referred to them as the "united bribers of South Huron ... meeting in ... solemn conclave before the bar". Incidentally it was during this protested election of 1874 that Exeter enjoyed its first visit from a Prime Minister. Alexander Mackenzie, "the dour Scot", came to South Huron to help Cameron. The Times spoke of Mackenzie's speeches in Exeter as having "distorted the truth till there was no knowing it". Mackenzie stayed with the Gidley's on William Street.

After the election trial Cameron dropped out of sight for a time; he evidently went south for some sunshine and while he was gone interesting events followed. In February 1875 the nomination meeting for the South Huron by election was held in Varna. Varna at this time was a small corner community with two general stores, a shoemaker, a blacksmith, a wagon maker, a tavern, two churches and an Orange Hall. Varna was a favourite spot for the political campaigners in the 1870's. Sir John Willison in his Reminiscences describes a political meeting at Varna in 1872. Willison, when he was only fourteen had walked from his house in Hillsgreen and came upon Greenway and Cameron in political debate.

> "a group of men sat upon the platform, and in front and around were a crowd of people with eyes fixed upon a man who was speaking. I knew at once that it was not a camp meeting for there was no suggestion of the fervour and solemnity which distinguished such events. There was occasional laughter and cheering, but I thought that some of those who listened did not like the behaviour of their neighbours. Finally the speaker sat down to much clapping and cheering. Another man arose, and there was even more cheering. As he spoke it was remarkable that he agreed with nothing that the first speaker had said, while those who had been silent now became happy and demonstrative. But the light was breaking . . . and almost instinctively I knew what game they were playing."

So the game went on and at the 1875 nomination meeting the Conservatives again nominated Greenway. The Grits did not put up a candidate, consequently, Greenway became South Huron's Member by acclamation. The Times was sure as were other Conservatives that Thomas Greenway was a good Tory. But the Toronto papers said that a deal had been made between Greenway and the Liberal government of Mackenzie. Willison, in his Reminiscences, suggests that "in fact there was an agreement before he was returned by acclamation that he would support the Administration" of Alexander Mackenzie. Greenway, however, announced that he was going to Ottawa as an Independent. The Mitchell paper said that he was "a traitor". The Toronto Mail referred to "the traitor Greenway" and called him the "chattel" of Mackenzie's government. It appears quite definite that the people of Huron thought he was going to Ottawa as a Conservative intending to support Sir John A. MacDonald and the Opposition. If he had not so intended and had in fact made an arrangement with Mackenzie then he was certainly guilty of a politically dishonest and personally selfish manoeuvre. He had accepted the nomination as a Conservative and said nothing to indicate that he was undergoing a change of political persuasion.

Later on Greenway did make statements in which he expressed a "desire to come to the House divested of all purely party principles". It was too late to cover up by then and the Times along with most other solid Tories in Huron became extremely critical of Greenway and remained critical of him throughout his term of office as Huron South's Member of Parliament. Many never forgave him for his duplicity.

It may be interesting to depart from the stream of Huron politics at this point to provide a brief comment on Thomas Greenway since he did play a rather prominent role in Canadian history although his important political contributions did not materialize until he had left Huron. He ultimately became Premier

of Manitoba and was in that office during the school crisis in Manitoba.

Greenway had been born in Cornwall on March 25, 1838; his father's name was Thomas and his mother was Elizabeth Heard. The family had probably come from Tiverton in Devonshire originally. In 1844 when young Thomas was six, the family emigrated to Canada, settling first near Bowmanville and moving to Huron in 1849. The senior Greenway died in 1850 and Mrs. Greenway and young Tom, finished the log cabin themselves. Tom was only twelve but he left school then, and took a job in London. He walked home to Centralia every Saturday night. In 1859, when he was twenty-one he went into the general merchandising business and opened his store in Centralia. He prospered in business and married Anne Hicks; she died of smallpox in 1875. At that time Greenway lived at Devon in the house later occupied by Mr. Wickwire; this house was torn down about 1961; it was located south of the garage presently located at Devon Corners. One of Greenway's sisters married Dr. J. A. Rollins who practiced in Exeter for some time.

Greenway was Reeve of Stephen for ten years, until 1875 the year he entered the Commons. It is reported that the little settlement of Greenway was so named at this time in honor of Thomas. It is obviously not part of our story to recount Greenway's Manitoba political career. It is sufficient to note that Greenway migrated to Manitoba in 1878 and pioneered in the Crystal City area; a number of Exeter area and other Huron people also migrated to this same area of Manitoba. He entered Manitoba politics in 1879 as a Liberal for the Mountain riding. He became Premier in 1888 and continued in that office until 1900. During this time the controversial separate school issue ensued. He served later on in the Dominion House as the member for Lisgar. In 1908 he was appointed to the Dominion Railway Commission. He died on October 31, 1908. Fred Landon reported that Greenway seldom, if ever, spoke in the Federal House. He had, then, a long political career. Some historians have suggested that he never rose to anything more than a kind of astute mediocrity. He is, nevertheless one of the more prominent politicians to emerge from the immediate Exeter area.

All of this could be expanded upon; we should, however, return to our main story. Greenway took his seat in the House in 1875 and represented Huron South until 1878. An election was called in 1878 and the preliminary events in Huron prior to that election are rather puzzling. In 1877 the Times noted that since Greenway had "gone over to the enemy," he would certainly not be considered as the Tory candidate in the next election; he had revealed himself as a full fledged reformer "a turncoat" and "unworthy of support" As a "chattel of the reform party" he was "lame and impotent"

The Conservatives came up with a Mr. Robert Porter and the Grits chose "the Benedict Arnold of South Huron" Thomas Greenway as their standard bearer Beneath the item noting Greenway's nomination the Times had a skull and crossbones captioned "Memento Mori" Shortly after these nominations some unusual political procedures transpired Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq Q C emerged from his south land vacation and somehow he secured the Liberal nomination which had been bestowed on Thomas Greenway Shortly after Greenway had given up the nomination he went west to Manitoba What actually happened can only be surmised Perhaps the Grits felt that Porter would defeat Greenway because of Greenway's widespread unpopularity Sudden political transformations (or defections depending on how one looks at them) are often very unpopular and local Liberals may have felt that the old Cameron magic was needed to defeat Porter Perhaps some deal was made by Greenway for some favors in the West in order to make way for Cameron's return It is beyond our scope to follow these lines of thought In brief Cameron replaced Greenway as the Liberal candidate The Times said "that Cameron had swallowed Greenway's vomit" and was going to try to save South Huron for the Grits.

With Porter campaigning vigorously for the Tories and Cameron working in his usual affective manner the 1878 election in Huron South was a hot affair The Exeter Times, the most partisan Tory paper in South Huron was naturally strongly in favor of Robert Porter as was the village of Exeter Exeter gave Porter 207 votes and Cameron 92 The Times wanted Sir John A back to dispose of the "effete party" and to end "the days of foetid corruption, wanton extravagance, and glaring misrule" Exeter had several good meetings Cameron and Porter spoke in the famed Francistown hostelry the Walper Hotel on September 4, 1878 the Times praised the "transcendent abilities" of Porter Isaac Carling R Pickard, Wharton Hodgson V B Elliott, prominent Exeter citizens are mentioned as being present to support Robert Porter

Throughout the campaign the Times kept up a steady attack on the Cameron party The paper referred to the "many men of the Reform Party of South Huron" who ran after Cameron as vultures "they cannot withstand the smell of carrion, they have a hankering after the fleshpots of Egypt". In order to be fair to the Times, it should be pointed out that its pages contained not only invective but also intelligent comment on the issues of the day The chief issues of the 1878 election were Free Trade as opposed to

MacDonald's National Policy, railways, Mackenzie's inept government and of course government over spending. Exeter businessmen and the Times were believers in the protection of MacDonald's National Policy, they were opposed to Free Trade and "Reciprocity with our Yankee neighbours."

The Times reported the speeches of the two candidates although Mr. Porter's speeches were reported much more fairly than Mr. Cameron's. Mr. Cameron was "wearisome, stale, and platitudinous" whereas Mr. Porter was "masterly, logical and convincing." There were meetings held all over the riding and they were well attended and well reported in all of the riding's weekly papers, the reports were naturally slanted by the political persuasion of the editors. Mr. Cameron was bitterly critical of the Exeter Times; he charged it with being a "dirty, miserable Tory sheet" and observed how "shameful" its lies were. At Limerick (Mt. Carmel) Cameron's speech contained "the usual abuse of the Exeter Times". It is difficult to blame Cameron for attacking the Times. After all if a paper said such things as "Cameron the egotistical individual . . . who would give his right arm and wade through filth and rottenness and falsehood to the teeth to represent South Huron", there was bound to be retaliation.

The campaign progressed with the candidates meeting each other in halls throughout the riding. Drew's Hall in Exeter was the scene of a major meeting with Isaac Carling in the Chair. Dr. Rollins chaired a meeting in Crediton with 1000 people present. Elimville, Grand Bend, Clinton, in fact, most places in the riding had an opportunity to see the candidates. The postal service was an important local issue, the postal service was described as being provided by a "milk wagon with a broken winded horse".

The 1878 campaign saw rancour, vilification and abuse heaped upon each other by the Grits and the Tories. After the vote the Times rejoiced "A fatal day for the Grits." Sir John and his Conservative Party carried the country but there was a dampening note, the local Conservative candidate Porter was defeated by the seemingly unbeatable Cameron. The Times deplored Cameron's win and said that it had been accomplished "by means the most foul and contemptible, by acts which degrade the constituency, and cover the so-called Reform Party with an odor of infamy and deepest shame. Acts of the blackest corruption were resorted to in every quarter of the riding by the unscrupulous hireling agents of one of the most notorious corruptionists in the Dominion. Nothing that low mean trickery could devise was left undone to secure that man Cameron's return. Such a humiliating event as the election of Cameron could only have been secured by bribery."

Consequent upon the widespread charges of corruption the

local Tories launched the usual protest against Cameron's election. The charge as usual against Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq., Q.C. was "bribery of the most scandalous and widespread kind". The Tories pressed the charge but Cameron was not found guilty this time. Cameron continued to be the dominant political figure in Huron for the next several elections, for example, he defeated Robert Porter in West Huron in 1882 again "by means most foul and contemptible." The Times also noted that "the blackest corruption was reported in every quarter of the riding". It should be remembered in all of this that all parties practiced forms of bribery and staged open displays of fairly rough methods of persuasion. On voting day in Huron and elsewhere, both parties gave free drinks of whiskey and beer. There was lots of fighting as both candidates had supporters at the polling places to rough up a few supporters of the opposition. "Johnny runabouts" hung around the polling places for the free drinks and without secret ballots everybody knew how everyone else voted and confusion, beatings and bribary were the orders of the day.

Cameron was not, however, directly involved in Exeter's political history after 1882 since Exeter, along with Stephen Township was gerrymandered into the North Middlesex Riding by the Conservative government. This was done prior to the 1882 election in an effort to bolster the Tory vote in North Middlesex. The riding was held by Timothy Coughlin, an Irish Catholic Conservative who had been elected for the first time in 1878, he won the seat again in 1882 and 1887. The Times had supported Coughlin in 1878 when the Parkhill Gazette attacked poor Timothy most rudely. The Gazette said that Tim was "a slovenly farmer". "If one wants to see barn doors on one hinge, cattle and pigs in the garden and orchard, fences dilapidated" and many other agricultural sins, the Gazette said Tim Coughlin's farm filled the bill. The Exeter editor sprang to Coughlin's defence by suggesting that the Gazette editor was a preposterous liar; "there was not", said the Times, "a better managed farm in the county".

The Parkhill Gazette was not overjoyed with the strengthening of North Middlesex for Tory election purposes and began in 1882 a campaign to suggest that the Orangemen among the Tories wanted to throw the Catholic Coughlin out. The Times observed that it was more dirty Reform Party work. The wicked Grits were trying to split the Catholic vote against Coughlin. It did not work, however, and the Times regarded Coughlin's win as a victory not only for good government but also a victory over the Grit's efforts at trying to prejudice the minds of the electors by introducing religion as a local issue. Exeter gave Coughlin solid majorities in both 1882 and 1887.

In 1891 Exeter again supported the Conservative candidate giving that party's candidate, Hutchins 255 votes out of a total of 363 Over all Hutchin's majority was only 2 (later increased to 6 on the recount) The Times had told the people to choose between the Conservative party which pledged loyalty to Britain, Protection and Prosperity and the "Yankee Grit" party alternatives of Free Trade Annexation and Ruin

Shortly after the 1891 general election the 'Old Man' died The Times columns were bordered in black and the Times expressed the sorrow that all of Canada felt when Sir John A MacDonald died In its columns the Times noted that Sir John's lesson to everyone was "faithful performance of duty to our country"

Exeter remained in North Middlesex until 1904 being represented by W H Hutchins who squeaked in again in 1896 with a majority of 11 Exeter was visited by the Prime Minister on June 18 1896 Sir Charles Tupper arrived in town accompanied by Sir John Carling Isaac's brother, and other dignitaries The party was greeted with 'unbounded enthusiasm". The largest crowd in the history of the village was reported to be on the streets When Tupper appeared on the station platform "cheers followed hats went up in the air handkerchiefs waved in all directions For some time Sir Charles was kept bowing in response to the plaudits of the populace" A procession to the Driving Park "was made up of a large number of carriages, two bands thousands of people on foot and some militia men under Captain Howard and Thomas Prior" "Locally prominent Conservatives such as Dr Rollins L H Dickson, Lancelot Hardy B S O Neill D Mills, Miller White, C H Sanders, were in the lead carriages The Council Reeve Bawden Deputy Reeve T B Carling, and Councillors Taylor, Snell and Treble were also in the carriages with Sir Charles Sir John Carling Dr Montague, and W H Hutchins Sir Charles delivered a speech to a large crowd in the Driving Park John Sherritt held the North Middlesex Riding for the Tories from 1900 to 1904

In 1904 Exeter was returned to the Huron South Riding, as were the townships of Usborne and Stephen A man with the metaphorical name of B B Gunn, a Seaforth merchant bore the Tory standard against the Liberal T Fisser During this 1904 election Exeter had a brief visit from Sir Wilfred Laurier who gave a five minute speech at the railway station Laurier was on his way to Lucknow to deliver a campaign speech Gunn won Huron South but Laurier's Liberals won the country

In 1908 M Y McLean of Seaforth, won two elections a by-election and the general election Exeter gave the Tory candidates, Horton and Sherritt substantial majorities.

In 1911 McLean was defeated by 114 votes The winner was J

J. Merner of Zurich who brought South Huron back into the Tory fold. The country also went Conservative as Laurier and his Liberals were defeated on the great issue of the day: Reciprocity. Exeter's two newspapers the Times and the Advocate engaged in a debate on Reciprocity. The Advocate was a vehement supporter of the Conservative position and opposed Reciprocity. The Times, which was an unquestioning supporter of the Conservative party during its first thirty years of existence had become a somewhat moderate supporter of Liberalism and of Laurier and King. This change in the Times' politics was a result of the rise to prominence on the paper of young J. M. Southcott whose political views differed markedly from those of the Whites whose true blue Conservatism had been reflected in the pages of the Times.

During the 1911 election campaign Exeter had its first visit from William Lyon Mackenzie King. He and M. Y. McLean spoke in the James Street Church shed on August 23. King was Laurier's Minister of Labor but the Advocate reported that "he scarcely measures up to the reputation accorded him by the Government papers. He is fluent but not accurate, ready but not convincing." The Advocate went on to suggest that King's "methods suggest the work of the unscrupulous promoter who tries to befuddle rather than enlighten, to perplex rather than instruct." He "put up a big bluff" said the Advocate, "but in doing so he reckoned without regard to the intelligence of his audience whose lack of enthusiasm must have been depressing." The Times was not critical of King and the Advocate took the Times to task for its "slavish adherence to the dictation of the government." The Advocate in one of the fairly rare exchanges between the two papers, said that the "Times had thrown off its hypocritical mask" and "come out in its true colors"; in other words the Advocate charged the Times with now being a Liberal paper. As we mentioned above old John White had been an unchangeable Tory but J. M. Southcott was a Liberal and over the years he gave moderate support to the Liberals, although he supported Conservatives as well, depending on the existing conditions. The Advocate, however, remained staunchly Tory until its amalgamation with the Times in the 1920's.

J. J. Merner attacked Reciprocity at a large rally held in the Opera House. Merner suggested that the Horse trade would suffer with Reciprocity, and Exeter which was still a fairly important center for the horse trade was impressed with Merner's speech. The Farmers' Bank was also attacked at this meeting as being a fraud. Many in South Huron had apparently "been fleeced by the bunch of thieves" which operated the Bank. Many lost money when the bank experienced financial difficulty. It is also worth noting that the Exeter salt industry made a strong case against Reciprocity as

well. So after the 1911 campaign was over Jonathan Joseph Merner was the winner; he represented South Huron until 1921.

In 1917 Merner was elected as the Conservative - Unionist candidate, or as the Tories termed it the "win-the-war candidate". Thomas McMillan from Tuckersmith was the Laurier Liberal candidate. The war and conscription were the great issues and South Huron was rather sharply split. There were, for example, certain elements in Stephen and Hay that voted heavily against the Conservative-Unionist government of Borden. The close division is reflected in Merner's very small majority of only 47 votes. In a larger study of this election in South Huron it would be possible to examine rural Western Ontario's attitude toward Conscription, rural Western Ontario was not pro-Conscription. Indeed, J. J. Merner who had voted for conscription in the House was told all over the riding that he would not have supported Conscription if he "had a boy". Exeter, with its very English background responded to the call of the government and gave Merner overwhelming support, 320 votes to 120. On the other hand, Hay Township gave McMillan an even greater majority. The Advocate probably spoke for Exeter:

> If you are in favor of sending reinforcements to the front to help the brave boys who are there, you will vote for Merner; if you are not you will vote the other way. ... The issue is plain, simple, free and above board. How any red blooded British subject can find any difficulty in making a choice is beyond comprehension.

Before leaving the 1917 election, it should be noted that in 1917 petitions were being circulated in Exeter calling for universal women's suffrage. Only women directly and closely related to servicemen could vote and evidently some women in Exeter were urging that this be extended to all females.

In the first election after the Great War, Exeter and South Huron voters were given their first three-man slate to choose from. The three candidates were J. J. Merner, Tom McMillan and William Black. Black, the Progressive, won the riding with a majority of only 44 over McMillan and 140 over Merner. Black went to Ottawa to join 64 other Progressives. Exeter remained loyal to the Tory, Merner, giving him a solid majority. Black owed his win to three townships - Usborne, Hay and Stephen.

The major story as far as Exeter was concerned in the 1925 election was the visit of Canada's Prime Minister, Mackenzie King who made his second visit to Exeter. He came in support of Thomas McMillan. Thousands of people were in the village on Labor Day, 1925 to see and hear King. The town was "gaily decorated" with flags and streamers strung across the streets. Mackenzie King arrived on the morning train and a parade led by the Zurich Band and Frank Taylor on a white horse escorted the Prime Minister to the steps of the library where Reeve W. D. Sanders read an "address of welcome". Mr. King responded with a speech "entirely void of politics". The Prime Minister was introduced to Mrs. Gidley and Mrs. Christie who had entertained Alexander Mackenzie fifty years before when that Liberal Prime Minister visited Exeter. The Reeve's address of welcome to King was most dignified and included "the freedom of the village". The Prime Minister enjoyed lunch in the house of Major Heaman.

In the afternoon five thousand people gathered in Victoria Park to hear King and other dignitaries speak. Two little girls, Jeanette Taman and Jean Stanbury presented King with a bouquet of roses from the garden of William Ward. Gladioli from the garden of J. S. Harvey "adorned the platform". If King's speech had been non political in the morning it was certainly political enough in the afternoon; he vigorously attacked Meighen and the Conservatives. He told the people to return the Liberals to power for their own good. J. C. Elliott of London, McMillan, Senator McCoig and others spoke. The arrangements for the day had been made by some of Exeter's prominent Liberals — Dick Seldon, Major Heaman, J. G. Stanbury, J. Jeckell, E. J. Christie. The four automobiles used by King and his party were Chryslers loaned by C. C. Pilon. The great rally may have helped McMillan win South Huron but the people of Exeter, while enjoying the day and its festivities went to the polls and cast a solid majority for J. J. Merner.

The 1926 election came when King lost the confidence of the House and Tom McMillan won again defeating Andrew Hicks the former UFO member in the Ontario House. Exeter stood firm, however, and gave the Conservative Hicks a large majority.

In 1930 R. B. Bennett came to Exeter; he was leader of the opposition but did go on to become Prime Minister. The people of Exeter then had another opportunity to visit with the man who would become their next Premier. He was in Exeter on July 23 in support of Nelson W. Trewartha. Exeter was again gaily decorated. The Dashwood Band and the Clinton Kiltie Band led a procession of cars to Victoria Park where "several thousand persons were present to hear the speeches". Catherine Armstrong and Britain Sanders presented flowers to Miss Bennett and Mrs. Trewartha. Reeve B. M. Francis welcomed Mr. Bennett who gave a major speech referring to all of the problems of the day. His visit to Huron was not enough, however, to unseat the popular McMillan who defeated Trewartha 6176 to 5827.

Tom McMillan unfortunately died two years later in the

summer of 1932. his death was the result of being "crushed against the side of a stall by a colt" on his farm in McKillop Township. He was a popular member. The ensuing by-election saw a strong campaign in South Huron since both the Liberals and the Conservatives considered the election an important indicator election. Both parties sent important political figures to Exeter to support the candidates. The Liberal candidate was William H. Golding and the Conservative was Louis Rader. Both men were nominated on September 26 in Hensall. The main Street of Hensall was jammed and the candidates spoke from a truck as the crowd stood in a drizzling rain to hear the issues discussed. Mr. Rader said he was a farmer: the riding needed a farmer in Ottawa, therefore he should be elected. — Mr. Golding spoke on the Bennett government's failure to end the depression and criticized the Tories for making the recent Imperial Economic Conference an issue in the by-election. Golding had been mayor of Seaforth for nine years.

Mackenzie King made his third visit to Exeter and spoke at a rally in the rink. Once again Main Street was decorated, the Zurich Band provided music and between 2000 and 3000 people gave King a "great ovation as he entered the building." B. W. F. Beavers chaired the meeting. Both King and Golding strongly criticized the government. The Times was favourably inclined toward Golding suggesting that he appeared to be "well informed." Mr. King stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Albert Traquair on this occasion.

The Conservatives also had their eyes on the riding and the Opera House was filled to capacity to hear the Hon. R. J. Manion, Minister of Railways and Canals. Louis Rader also spoke telling of his twelve years in municipal work which included the wardenship of Huron County. The result of the heavy campaigning saw Golding elected by a 2000 vote majority. Exeter stuck to its Tory tradition and gave Rader a majority but Golding's majority was the largest ever recorded in the riding up to that time. This, of course, marked the beginning of a long political career for Golding which eventually took him to the Senate.

In 1935 Golding recorded an even larger majority over Frank Donnelly and R. J. MacMillan, the Stevens Reconstruction Party candidate. While Exeter voted Tory, Golding polled the largest percentage of votes a Liberal had ever polled in Exeter. Donnelly secured only a 59 vote majority in Exeter out of 707 votes cast. Exeter was in the Huron Perth riding for this election. By 1940 Golding was considered almost unbeatable and James Morley, a young Exeter lawyer was almost a sacrificial candidate for the Conservatives. Tom Pryde placed Morley's name in nomination. Golding had no trouble in securing a large majority over the riding but Exeter gave Morley a large majority.

Tom Pryde made his first foray into the election battles in 1945. He appealed to the voters as Flt. Lt. Thomas Pryde, a veteran of two wars and a Conservative. He said, "the Liberal government is unworthy to represent the people of Canada" and appealed to the voters of Huron to help remove the government of King. John Bracken, the Tory leader, came to Exeter and spoke at a rally in the arena. Two hundred students from the high school were present to hear Bracken's speech. Also in this election the voters of Exeter had their first opportunity to vote for a C.C.F. candidate; Mr. G. A. Cann of Exeter stood as that party's representative. While Pryde's strong and worthy campaign reduced Mr. Goldings majority to 466, he was not able to unseat the popular Seaforth member. This was Golding's last election.

In 1949 Mr. Golding did not seek re-election; he had served for seventeen years in the House. He had been Deputy Chairman of the whole House and as a result of his service to the country and his party he was rewarded with a seat in the Senate. He gave excellent service in the Senate, serving on various committees including the important divorce committee. he had one of the best attendance records in the Senate. When he died in December, 1961 he had served continuously in public life for forty-five years as municipal councillor, mayor, Member of Parliament and Senator. As the Times-Advocate expressed it, "he always gave his best."

The 1949 election was contested for the Liberals by another Seaforth native, A. Y. McLean. McLean's grandfather had been both a federal and provincial member. Elgin McKinley, whose son Robert was elected Huron member almost fifteen years later was the Conservative candidate. The C.C.F. contested the riding with Rev. John R. Peters standing for the socialist party. With Golding not in the running the Tories had some hope of "redeeming the riding". At the Conservative nomination meeting, it is interesting to note that C. S. MacNaughton was nominated. he remarked as he declined "that Ottawa was full of bureaucrats, who spent money with reckless abandon".

During the 1949 campaign Exeter enjoyed another visit from a Prime Minister. This time, of course, it was the Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent. Mr. St. Laurent reached Exeter in the afternoon and proceeded to the front of the library where a large crowd had gathered. The London Police Boys Band, the staff and students of the high school led by June Walters and the Girls' Bugle Band, the "public school scholars and staff" and many townspeople were assembled. Ben Tuckey was the Chairman. Mr. St. Laurent was welcomed by Reeve A. J. Sweitzer. "The address of the Prime Minister could not be called a political speech. there was no platform oratory. but it was more of a friendly get acquainted address." Premier Frost of Ontario also visited Exeter in 1949. Barbara Tuckey and Marilyn Hicks presented flowers to Mrs. St. Laurent.

The only suggestion of rancour in the Exeter area during this campaign appeared in the Times-Advocate as the editor and Mr. W. F. Oestreicher exchanged verbal barrages in the columns of the paper. Mr. Oestreicher talked of the Times-Advocate's "gross misrepresentation" and "scare propaganda which was directed against the C.C.F.". The editor referred to some of the C.C.F.'s contentions as "sewage". The exchange, however, was mild when compared with the strong language of the 1870's and 1880's which appeared in the Times. When the vote was in, the Liberals had won the riding again as McLean polled a majority of 512 over McKinley. The C.C.F. polled only 558 votes to McLean's 7000. It goes without saying that Exeter voted Conservative again.

In 1953 Exeter became a part of the new riding of Huron, two incumbent members, Elston Cardiff and A. Y. McLean sought to be the Member for the new Huron constituency. Cardiff, the Tory from the old Huron North riding defeated McLean by less than 1000 votes. Exeter voted 783 to 499 for Cardiff. Thus for the first time in 36 years, Exeter and the south part of Huron were represented by a Conservative in Ottawa. During the 1953 campaign John Diefenbaker was in Exeter where he accompanied Cardiff to the races. Lester Pearson also visited Exeter that year.

In 1957 Cardiff again defeated McLean by 3715 votes, in 1958 Cardiff defeated Exeter lawyer W. G. Cochrane. Cochrane maintained that "the dissolution of parliament was entirely uncalled for at this time" and he also attempted to relate the closing of the Exeter canning factory to the Diefenbaker government's policies which reduced exports. It was really no contest, however, since Cardiff was swept to victory by his own brand of electoral magic and of course, by the "Diefenbaker deluge" which swept the largest majority in Canada's history into power. The vote in Huron was 14,108 to 7550 for Cardiff but "Bill Cochrane suffered no personal embarrassment in the results in Huron. While he was beaten by a record majority, it was still far less in proportion to others. ... When an unknown farmer could defeat veteran campaigner Jimmy Gardiner ... the tide was beyond dyking." The Exeter Times-Advocate went on to suggest that the leadership cult which had started in Canada with St. Laurent and had culminated in Diefenbaker's huge majority was unhealthy and dangerous.

The Cardiff electoral magic continued to work in 1962 when he defeated three opponents, Ernest Fisher, Liberal, Carl Hemingway, N.D.P., and Earl Douglas, Social Credit. All failed to dent Cardiff's hold on Huron. During this election the Times-Advocate embarrassed itself when it reported that ‘ few doubt, at this moment, that veteran L E Cardiff will be defeated' The T A later reported that it had intended to say "few doubt that he will be elected" In 1963 Cardiff defeated Liberal Gordon McGavin.

In 1965 and 1968 Robert E McKinley defeated Liberal candidate Maitland Edgar to hold Huron for the Conservatives despite the country's swing back to the Liberals

In federal politics then Exeter has a one hundred percent record, in every election since Confederation Exeter voted Conservative. The only really notable political figures associated with Exeter at the federal level were Thomas Greenway and Senator Golding The other figures never did rise to a place of national prominence or fame. The brief review of federal politics in Exeter and area has shown how rough politics was in the period following Confederation to about 1900 Newspapers were almost libellous in their comments, and bribery, threats and rough tactics were common As time went on the newspapers became more moderate and the number of bribery charges diminished in Huron Some of the more personal elements in politics also disappeared The large political rally that characterized the small town has all but gone Personal visits of an extended nature to small towns by Prime Ministers are a thing of the past The number of people who are hard line Tories or Grits has diminished to the point where the apolitical majority now controls the vote

In the old days most local villagers and farmers knew the candidates and had talked with them Now many people even in a rural riding do not know the candidates nor do they know the Member In our age of electronic politics the political meeting is less efficient Much of the color has gone from federal politics and people seem to be less involved than they were in the past While Exeter still votes Tory the chances grow with each election that it may some day vote Grit as people become less and less partisan If Exeter ever should vote any way but Tory though a small earthquake may occur in the old grave yard north of town as the old-time Tories roll over in their graves

In provincial politics Exeter did vote Progressive twice but the rest of the time it remained Conservative Exeter has been represented in the provincial House by only 12 Members since Confederation These twelve were R Gibbons Isaac Carling, Archibald Bishop M Y McLean Henry Eilber Andrew Hicks, Nelson Trewartha, W G Medd J Ballantyne, Dr Hobbs Taylor Tom Pryde and C S MacNaughton Six of these were Conservatives four were Liberals, two were third party representatives, viz. Medd a Progressive and Hicks a UFO member

The first man elected to represent Huron South in the

Legislative Assembly of Ontario was Liberal Robert Gibbons he won by 10 votes but his term was very short lived however, since his Conservative opponent Isaac Carling petitioned for an inquiry into the election The hearings regarding the election are recorded to the Journals of the Ontario Legislative Assembly and they reflect the loose political morality of the day There were charges and counter charges of bribery and corruption and of irregular voting The Hay Township voters lists included some illegal votes for Gibbons

The hearing was held before five appointees of the Attorney General s office and three of the five being Conservatives decided that Carling had a majority of the legally acceptable votes and was, therefore, entitled to be declared the duly elected Member for Huron South

Carling and Gibbons fought the 1871 provincial election with Gibbons winning by 207 votes Gibbons was appointed Sheriff in 1873 and the ensuing by-election resulted in the Liberal Archibald Bishop defeating Conservative George Case Bishop was to hold the seat for the next 22 years Bishop was from Usborne Township and had served on the Township Council since 1862 He held the Wardenship of the county in 1873 and 1874 Bishop was born in Edinborough Scotland on September 6, 1829 and had come to Canada in 1849 He had settled in Usborne in 1854 and married Janet Doig in 1862 Bishop died in April 1901 after being stricken with paralysis while alone in his buggy

For 22 years Archie Bishop was unbeatable George Case tried again in 1875 and lost by 78 votes The Bishop victory was due according to the Times, to two factors One of these factors was the Grit gerrymander of Goderich Township which saw 3 polls No 3 4, and 6 only in South Huron The other factor was the indolence of the Tory voters in Stephen Township' The Conservatives failed to come out for Case feeling that the gerrymander had licked them anyway

G E Jackson took Bishop on in 1879 losing by 160 votes The Times felt sure that Bishop would lose the editor remarked that ' Mr Bishop our talented representative will be like Grandfather s clock, stopped short, never to go again" In reporting one of Bishop s speeches the Times observed the following

> "Mr A Bishop South Huron s representative in his wandering remarks said that he had only two years of schooling If Mr Bishop made these remarks for the information of the electors they were quite uncalled for as the fact that his education is limited is patent to everyone

The Times did not like Mr Bishop s attitude toward education The Times remarked that Bishop must have a poor opinion of the mental calibre of farmers in that Bishop opined that "a little readin', writin', and 'rithmetic is all a farmer's son requires". The Times noted that it was a matter of surprise that even Mr. Bishop would hold such anti-diluvian views on education.

Jackson was defeated again by Bishop in 1883. Exeter, as usual, followed the Times' views and voted Tory. The Times suggested that Mr. Bishop should "sink out of sight for his part in the sins of the Mowat government". In 1886 and 1890 Bishop easily defeated Tories Swenerton and Holmes.

In 1894, after 22 years, Bishop passed South Huron to M. Y. McLean who carried on the Liberal tradition. McLean secured majorities in only two municipalities, Seaforth and Tuckersmith, but these were so large that they were sufficient, by 16, to overcome the Tory majorities elsewhere in the riding. When Bishop stepped down he commented in the Times on a party he had attended toward the end of his term. It seemed that Country Boy Bishop did not socialize much and he immortalized one of his few social gatherings in 1894 in a long poem which appeared in the Advocate in March, 1894. The poem was entitled "Borrowed Swallertail" and a small sample of it is given below.

"One night the hospitable government
of Simcoe avenoo
Got up a fete to celebrate
South Huron's son's debut
The lavishness of wealth displayed
Would turn a Croesus pale
And best of all was Bishop
in his borrowed swallertail"

In 1898 the long Liberal reign in South Huron was ended by Henry Eilber. This victory marked the beginning of another long term in South Huron. Eilber served the riding for 21 years. His father Jacob had come from Pennsylvania to Crediton and had established a general merchandise business and eventually became postmaster in Crediton. Eilber had been in municipal politics in Stephen as councillor, reeve, deputy reeve, and clerk. He died in January, 1943 at the age of 86 having served in municipal affairs, in the provincial legislature and as secretary treasurer of the Hay Township Mutual Fire Insurance company for 53 years.

But to return to the 1898 election. It was a joyous occasion for the Times and for Exeter. The headline in the Times, beneath the ensign of Ontario, fairly shouted:

"Eilber, a Bismarck
South Huron Redeemed
After 30 years!"

As Leacock says in Sunshine Sketches, "Men who had voted, with pain and sorrow in their hearts for the Liberal Party for twenty years, came out that evening and owned up straight that they were Conservatives". Eilber had not won easily. The Grits had attacked his character and his business ethics; circulars among the Catholics accused him of being a P.P.A. Even after he had won, McLean, the defeated Liberal candidate suggested that Eilber's victory was "a dishonourable and purchased victory". The Tory leader, James Pliny Whitney, had been in Exeter during the campaign and had addressed a mass meeting in the skating rink. 3000 people were present to hear the Exeter Brass Band play "patriotic airs" and to lead the procession from the hotel to the rink. "Hail to our Beloved Chief" was printed on a large banner over the platform from where Dr. Rollins chaired the meeting. Whitney attacked Sir Oliver Mowat's government with such charges as "that good man Sir Oliver Mowat had ridden both the saloon and temperance horses while making promises to the temperance people he had his hand in the pockets of the license holders — and it seldom came out empty".

Eilber spoke as "a humble German boy who graduated from a twenty foot log schoolhouse (applause)". But he said "he was going into the fight to win". Eilber did indeed win in 1902, 1905, 1908, 1911 and 1914. He was criticized by the Times in 1908 for having the riding gerrymandered. The Times said he went "crying to Whitney" to get Grit Seaforth out of South Huron and to add the other Tory polls of Goderich Township to the riding.

Eilber's opponent in 1911 and 1914 was Edmund Zellar. In 1914 a major Ontario issue was Temperance. Edmund Zellar's pledge to the people of South Huron was to "abolish the bar". He said a vote for Eilber was a vote for the bar and a vote for Zellar was a vote to "wipe out the curse". Zellar said 6000 men fill drunkards' graves in Canada each year. "These 6000 were once little boys with the fond hopes of their good mothers, yet the bar got them". Zellar even quoted Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany who claimed that "nerves are undermined and endangered by the use of alcohol".

In June 1914 N. W. Rowell, the Liberal and Temperance leader spoke at the rink in Exeter. A huge crowd gathered to hear Rowell pledge to "wipe out the bar in the Ontario Club, the Albany Club and every other club". He said the Conservatives had chosen to "stand by the bar" and that "the liquor forces were lined up behind them". But the "churches were on the Liberals side". "Remember your young people" said Rowell, "don't let a good Huron boy become ensnared in a wicked, evil barroom". Prom-

nent Exeter Liberals such as Heaman and Stanbury arranged the meeting and "Master Douglas Stanbury, the boy soprano sang".

The Conservatives and Eilber, despite the strong attack by the Liberals and Zellar, and despite the "lying, slandering sneaks" that went up and down the riding "slandering" Mr. Eilber, still won the 1914 election. Soon after this election, the Premier, Mr. Whitney died.

In 1919, the long Eilber reign ended in South Huron. This was the year that the UFO swept into power and Eilber did not contest the seat. Some said that he saw the "writing on the wall" and stepped down before the election. Fred Ellerington made his only foray into politics and the Conservative standard bearer; he went down to defeat as did Liberal John T. Morgan. The winner was the UFO candidate, Andrew Hicks of Centralia. A number of prominent Exeter and area men supported the UFO cause at this time. W. D. Sanders, a UFO director, pointed out that "the big interests are manipulating things to keep the common people hewers of wood and drawers of water". He said, "there were too many officials, too many laws, and too many men getting something for nothing". R. E. Pickard felt that "we have too many millionaires running the country" and went on to suggest that if farmers did not secure more representation, "the other fellow will see that the farmer will carry the big end of the load". S. J. Pym, Enos Herdman, R. G. Seldon, John Essery, Joshua Johns and many other prominent men of the area supported the UFO movement. Andrew Hicks suggested that "the manufacturers are to Canada what the Kaiser was to Germany and only the farmers could stop them" from totally running the government and the country. He said "farmers have to stick together".

Some of the men who supported the UFO movement did not go so far as to support the party at the polls. Traditionally Liberal men like Pickard, Seldon, Essery and others probably voted Liberal while sympathizing with the farmers. Exeter remained Tory and gave Ellerington a very large majority. Usborne, Stephen, and Hay gave substantial majorities to Hicks who won the riding by about 700 votes over Ellerington. Hicks became the UFO whip during his time in the House.

For some reason Hicks was dropped in 1923 by the UFO and the party chose W. G. Medd an Exeter creamery operator. "Considerable surprise was felt throughout the riding when it was known that Mr. Hicks had been dropped by the party". Hicks had evidently done a good job. Nelson Trewartha was the Tory candidate and he and George Henry held a well-attended rally in the Opera House. D. F. MacGregor, the Liberal standard bearer criticized the UFO administration and the Conservative party "in the usual manner" remarked the Times with perhaps a trace of tedium. The Tories swept South Huron and the province.

W. G. Medd stood as the Progressive candidate in 1926 and 1929. In these two elections no Liberal contested the riding. The Tories were A. Neeb and G. Elliott. Medd won both elections and Exeter, for the only time in its history, voted against the Conservative candidates. In the 1929 election the returning officer Fred Ford of Clinton declared Elliott elected by a small majority; a celebration occurred in both Clinton and Seaforth. The Ontario dailies declared Elliott's election the next day. The Times-Advocate, however, reported as follows:

> "As we go to press this morning the results of the election in Huron are in doubt. After working until a late hour and with many long distance telephone calls, we place Mr. Medd's majority at ten. Mr. Ford the returning officer at Clinton gives Mr. Elliott a small majority."

The Times-Advocate proved to be right and the official figures declared Medd elected by 26. This must be one of the rare occasions when a small town weekly scooped the big dailies. W. C. Pearce was Medd's agent. Mr. Medd had come to the Exeter area in 1904 when he took over the Winchelsea creamery. In 1919 he bought the Exeter creamery from J. H. Scott and moved to Exeter. He lived in the large red house on Andrew Street near Hill Street. Medd served only two terms and in 1934 the riding, now known as Huron was contested by James Ballantyne (Independent Liberal-Progressive) — he was covering all sides it seems, William Cooper (Independent) and George H. Elliott (Liberal-Conservative).

At the nomination meeting in Hensall things were going along fairly smoothly "with very little heckling" until Elliott "cast a reflection on the integrity of one of the speakers by saying that he is what I call a blood sucker'." Pandemonium reigned with cries of "shame", "sit down", "that's dirty". The meeting did come to order again with Ballantyne receiving a "great ovation". Cooper's speech "brought forth many a hearty laugh and his address was not taken any too seriously." The election was a hotly contested one. Mitchell Hepburn came to the riding to lead a strong Liberal campaign, which paid off and the Liberals after 29 years in opposition were returned to power. Ballantyne also won in Huron.

Ballantyne won again in 1937 over Dr. Hobbs Taylor, the Dashwood physician and Conservative. Dr. A. Moir contested the riding as the Temperance candidate. The Canada Temperance Act was an issue in this election in Huron. The Hepburn Government had "refused to accept the findings of the Supreme Court and the Privy Council in regard to the Canada Temperance Act as it applied to Huron County." Earl Rowe had promised to clean up the beverage rooms in Huron County. Dr. Taylor promised to see what he could do to help close up the beverage rooms, since "he was conscientious in the belief that they are a menace to the youth of the country." The Conservatives promised to recognize Canada Temperance Act counties as "dry territory." The forces for Temperance in Huron decided to support Dr. Taylor since "Hepburn has overruled the will of the people in this county and his action in placing beer parlours here was an outrage." Some Temperance men, however, supported the move to field a Temperance candidate. This man, Dr. Moir polled 942 votes to Taylor's 5862 but Ballantyne, despite the furor over Hepburn's liquor policy polled 7042 votes to hold Huron for the Grits. Dr. Moir was not subdued; he wrote the Times Advocate as follows:

> "The liquor magnates think they have again dealt us another knockout blow which will keep us sleeping . . . but in this they reckon wrongly for the Temperance people of Huron are stirred as never before to strike at the subtle python head of the liquor traffic wherever that head appears."

In 1943 another Exeter man entered the provincial field. Benson Tuckey replaced Ballantyne as the Liberal candidate. Tuckey and other local Liberals were not happy with Ballantyne despite his successful retention of the constituency for nearly 10 years. Tuckey was opposed by Taylor and Oestreicher. Taylor won the election by 461 votes over Tuckey who stood on a platform of "strong provincial rights and strong local government." Taylor increased his majority to 2000 in 1945 over Ballantyne and C.C.F.er, Huckins. Taylor was ill and could not campaign but his supporters campaigned for him and pointed to the new highways, increased school grants, and reduced hydro rates. The Conservatives also played upon Huron's fears of socialism. Taylor called Caldwell, the C.C.F. leader "the Karensky of the Canadian Revolution" and suggested that the C.C.F. would destroy freedom. It was during this time that E. D. Bell assumed the Presidency of the Huron riding.

Dr. Taylor died on Dec. 17, 1947 at the age of 51. He had been a "hard working Member interested in and working for the welfare of the riding." Two Exeter men contested the resulting by-election in February, 1948. Tom Pryde and Ben Tuckey engaged in a "clean, square, and above board" contest. Pryde also remarked that "when its all over Mr. Tuckey will still be doing his trucking." The Temperance people of Huron probably supported Pryde although the Temperance Federation said we "have no reason to look with favor on either party. Our cause has suffered greatly at the hands of both." Tom Pryde won the election but had to go to the people

again in June 1948 and fought a close battle with Frank Fingland who appeared at one point to have won. Pryde had conceded but when the final count was in he had a 109 majority over Fingland.

Thomas Pryde retained the seat again in 1951 and 1955 against John Armstrong and James Scott. Tom Pryde died in 1958 having served the Huron riding for 10 years. In May of that year C. S. MacNaughton began his political career which took him to the highest political office any Huron Member of the Ontario Legislature ever achieved. He eventually became Provincial Treasurer and was frequently acknowledged as the senior statesman in the government of John Robarts and later of William Davis. He won the 1958 by-election by 1164 votes over Dr. Addison of Clinton; in 1959 and 1963 he defeated Harry Strang and in 1967 he polled the largest majority ever recorded in Huron polling 8343 votes. Brigadier Smith of Bayfield had 3723 votes and John Boyne had 1340 votes. One hundred years previous in 1867 the narrowest margin was recorded with 10 being Gibbon's majority over Carling. Mr. MacNaughton is the only provincial member from the riding to attain cabinet rank.

This brief survey of Exeter's place in the political life of the county has shown how much entertainment value politics had in the early years when great meetings and rallies brought, often thousands of people to town for a day of celebration. Small town politics now do not provide this element. Prime Ministers do not come to small towns much any more to make speeches. The day of the small town political rally is over. The day of the vehemently political small town weekly is over; no longer do the county papers refer to the 'enemy' when speaking of the opposing party. A great deal of color has been lost, and too often blandness is the characteristic of our politics. The gross acts of political bribery and corruption are gone, at least from our part of the country. Violent political arguments no longer are heard in the barber shops and bars and meeting halls of the villages and towns. Political loyalties are now blurred as the number of committed Tories and Grits diminish. As much of the partisanship and fun disappear from politics we run the risk of taking the government and our politicians too seriously, something which despite the surface vehemence of our politics in the past, we have not done in Canada.

People would not stand in the rain for two hours to hear the candidates speak today. The candidates don't 'harangue the troops' in the same way. Politics are now too solemn. Our greatest political figure was known to drink rather heavily and we have laughed at our politicians and they have laughed at themselves. We have nevertheless been law abiding but now the level of interest in politics at all levels has fallen, at the same time our degree of seriousness has increased. It seems paradoxical. So the great election fights of small town "Upper Canada" seem to be a thing of the past and it is unlikely that they will return.

Hopefully, we can recapture the spirit of our former political activity and direct it into creative political channels. Perhaps the youth will shape a new politics and hopefully the words of Sir John A. MacDonald still apply:

> "I believe that the spirit of our fathers, who fought and won battle after battle, still exists in their sons, and if I thought otherwise I would sooner the grass was growing over my grave rather than I should see the degradation of the country which I loved so much and served so long."

Perhaps before closing this section it is worth noting again that Exeter and the immediately adjacent area can claim as native sons several important political figures. Three provincial premiers come to mind. William Melville Martin who was premier of Saskatchewan, came from Exeter. J. G. Gardiner whose political offices included the premiership of Saskatchewan as well as federal cabinet membership, and Thomas Greenway who became premier of Manitoba came from the area. Other names include Frank W. K. Tom who became an Ohio senator, W. H. Harvey who was a member of the Saskatchewan legislature, J. A. Gregory also a Saskatchewan M.P., Donald Fleming was born in Exeter. Fleming was a member of the Diefenbaker cabinet. Of recent date C. S. MacNaughton is the most well-known.

Epilogue

But what of Exeter today?

A town whose population sign reads 3200 but whose population swells to 5000 once a year on Rodeo Day. Exeter is still primarily influenced by the agricultural land around it. Exeter's natives swear its the best little town in Ontario, and the more newly-arrived inhabitants seem surprised when a stranger smiles at them on the street or says a friendly hello in a store. We don't have a movie theatre, but in the winter you can bowl, snowmobile, skate, toboggan, play hockey or learn a craft. In the summer the pool is full of kids and the parks ring with the sound of children's laughter.

Exeter is a town where the retired and not quite-retired farmers congregate in the morning around the post office and discuss the weather or the price of beans — especially on Thursdays when the local newspaper is published.

Its a town where people come to get away from the big city rush and find its a great place to raise a family. Then the kids grow up and head back to the city for some 'action.'

And the kids, what of them? One hundred years have not made a big difference in the character of the kids of Exeter. Rural enough to still remain unsophisticated, urban enough to think they're wordly wise. Exeter's kids turn out pretty well — and after all, they are what the next hundred years are all about.

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History of Exeter

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STEPHEN and USBORNE

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To My Family

Diane, Susan, Deborah
Catherine and John
and to the
memory of those whose
strength built this
community.

The printing of this book was financed by the Council of the Town of Exeter. The book was printed by The Exeter Times-Advocate whose publisher, Mr. Robert Southcott extended his full cooperation in providing complete access to the files of the newspaper and in advising me on the general format of the book. The typing was done by my wife, Diane whose assistance is gratefully appreciated

J. L. Wooden

Author's Note

The history of Exeter has been prepared with the help of so many people that an enumeration of their names would certainly result in the omission of someone. Consequently I will not attempt to name anyone. I will simply say thank you to everyone who assisted me in obtaining information.

There are a great many quotations indicated in the book and again I have not shown the source of these quotes in most cases. Most of the quotations come from newspaper files, letters, private papers, historical sketches by individuals and similar sources. The quotes are indicated, but acknowledgement of each quote would have given the book a cluttered appearance.

It was my original intention to have included a much larger section on the schools and churches. I also originally hoped to include a chapter on Exeter's contribution in the Great Wars along with some comment on the earlier military history. A chapter on the place of the small town in Ontario's history was also planned but all of these things are made impossible by the limitation of space and the pressure of time.

I have no doubt made errors and omitted events that some people may feel should have been included. Such errors and omissions are solely my responsibility and not those of the people who assisted me.

I hope The History of Exeter will provide some insight into the life of small town Ontario and provide enjoyment to those who have some connection with Exeter.

The work on this History should have been started many years ago so that it could have been more complete and more accurate. However, publication was planned so that the book would be available during Exeter's Centennial Year, 1973.

Exeter, Ontario
January, 1973 J. L. Wooden

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chapter 1

The Beginnings of Exeter

'To hunt to fight to wait for years to hew out a farm, to make a homestead one must needs be a man'

"A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees"

One hundred and forty years is not really a long time on the scale of human history. Seven score years — the lifetime of two men and yet that is the period of time that has passed since the first white man took his axe to the great forest of this region and began transforming it from a densely wooded area to an open agricultural land from which most of the trees have been removed. Down went the great oaks some of which, such as John Galt's famous Beverly Oak measured thirty-three feet in girth and eighty feet in the height of its trunk, above the top of which rose the crown of vast branches, down came the giant black cherry trees as big as ten feet in girth and fifty feet high, down came buttonwoods so big that several men could crawl into a hollowed trunk and drink a quart of whiskey in honor of its size, as "Tiger" Dunlop and his cronies did once. Down they came — black walnut, basswood, maple, elm — as the settlers took their "dive into the woods". Some would wish that the settlers had left a few of the great trees standing and that we had some large acreages of climax woods left but it is only lately that we have begun to look with nostalgia upon the forest. "The Canadian settler hated a tree, he regarded it as his natural enemy as something to be destroyed, eradicated, annihilated by all and any means."

So great woods covered the land which was called the Huron Tract, a million acres of land in the heart of Upper Canada owned by the Canada Company, a land and settlement company which had been established in England in 1826. That part of the Huron Tract in which Exeter eventually developed was not greatly different from the rest of the Tract except perhaps that it was wetter and less amenable to settlement than other sections. The area was also off the Huron Road which brought in the settlers from the east and helped the areas north of Exeter fill in more quickly than the Exeter area. The first written reference to the Exeter area is found in the diaries of the Rev. William Proudfoot who passed through the area in 1833. He described the area as having "excellent soil" with the trees "being chiefly maple, elm, oak, ironwood, and black ash". On the whole, however, Proudfoot was happy to pass through the area which he considered to be a "dreary region". When he passed up the London Road, which at that time was barely a trail, there were only two dwellings in what is now Exeter. These were the shanties of James Willis and William McConnell. Proudfoot spent the night in McConnell's shanty, which also served as a tavern or inn, this was Exeter's first hotel and was erected in February, 1833. It stood somewhere near where the Presbyterian Church now stands. Proudfoot was a Presbyterian missionary so there is a nice anticipatory touch in the site of his lodging. Proudfoot described McConnell's tavern as "the most wretched place I have ever put a night in. The logs are not well built, the interstices are very carelessly filled in, and the wind finds its way between the logs and the door did not fit by at least three or four inches". It certainly was not as good as the inn operated by McConnell's father at Elginfield. Proudfoot did not like the food either, it was probably like most tavern food at the time and consisted of heavy Indian meal bread, fried pork or beef tallow and tea. Butter and coffee were luxuries, sugar and milk were virtually nonexistent.

Proudfoot was probably too hard on William McConnell who had only just built the shanty a short time, perhaps only a few weeks, before Proudfoot came. McConnell was a Canada Company contractor and he was not only required to maintain his shanty as an inn but also to maintain the twenty-mile section of the London Road from Clandeboye to Clinton. McConnell eventually acquired some four hundred acres on both sides of the Ausable River and on both sides of the London Road, some of this land was deeded to McConnell by the Canada Company as part payment for his work on the road. He built the first saw mill in the area on the river in 1833 and in 1834 he built the first grist mill and dam, probably quite near where the dam is now. This mill ground only whole wheat flour for years. One of his children, born in 1833 is said to have been "the first white child born in the region". This statement may not be quite accurate since other sources suggest that a son of Thomas Lamb, who had settled a short distance north of McConnell, was the first white child born in the area. Lamb's son was probably the first to be born in the Huron Tract between London and Goderich. However, McConnell "was for many years one of the outstanding promoters of the district" and to him goes the honor of being the first to operate a tavern and the first to operate a manufacturing activity in the area. McConnell was also a Huron District Councillor for the United Townships of Usborne, Stephen and Hay in 1842. He was not, however, the first settler in what is now Exeter.

The first white settlers to take up land in what is now Exeter were James Willis and his wife Jane. They "braved the terrors of loneliness and an unknown region". He took up Lot 20, London Road Survey, Usborne Township which was in the south-east part of what is now Exeter. Willis came up the London Road sometime during the winter of 1832 and built his first shanty somewhere in the area of what is now Main and Simcoe Streets. He left his wife in London while he built his cabin which was no doubt "rudely constructed of small round logs. The roof was covered with clap boards or basswood trough and the spaces between the logs were stuffed with moss or clay." These first shanties were makeshift structures erected to serve only for a few years until such time as the settler could build his "hewed log farmhouse" or perhaps in the area we are talking about, frame or brick residences replaced the log shanty directly.

Willis was the only settler within a twenty-mile distance in any direction, the London Road had been opened only three years before he came and was merely a sleigh track at this time. It had not yet been logged or stumped north of Lucan. James and Jane Willis, then, were the first pioneers in the whole area and rank among the very first settlers in the whole Huron Tract. In Goderich, Dunlop's "castle" and a few log cabins owned by Gooding, Louis Belmore, Frank Tranch, Frank Kneshaw, Peter Andrews and Feltre Fisher were the only signs of settlement in 1832. Ben Miller's mill had been built, but few other signs of settlement were visible in this region. Unlike the later arrivals to the Exeter area, who came from Devon, Willis had emigrated from Armagh, Ireland, a short time before coming to the Huron Tract.

There are the usual stories about the Willis family, as there are

about other pioneers. For example. "Mrs. Willis had a particular dread of wolves. This was in part, a result of their continued howling at night. At times when her husband was away, she found the noise almost unendurable." There was one occasion when Jane was roasting venison over her hearth fire when a large grey wolf bounded through the door "seized the piece of meat and was gone". Wolves carried off small pigs and other animals from the Willis yard. Despite the hardships, which together with heavy work and child-bearing made many pioneer women into drudges or "lonely neurotics", Jane Willis reached the age of ninety and saw "the trackless forest" transformed into the thriving village of Exeter where she was known as "Granny Willis", she died on May 30, 1893.

Another well-known story concerns James Willis who walked in the spring of 1833 to London to buy a hoe. He had one shilling but found that a hoe cost three shillings. So he walked home and planted his potatoes with his axe on the small area which he had cleared. It is said that he obtained an excellent yield of potatoes from the soil between the stumps.

There is no record of why Willis chose the spot that eventually became Exeter. Perhaps he was aware that the site which he picked was half-way between London and Goderich and perhaps he felt that eventually some development would occur. In any case he was the first, but he was soon followed by other pioneers who took up land along the London Road. Incidentally, the enlarged brick Willis residence still stands behind Graham Arthur's Garage. The brick part was added later by George Willis. William May settled a short distance south of Willis on June 21, 1832; this was just a few months after Willis came. Thomas Lamb settled a few miles north of Willis about the same time that May came. John Balkwill a brother-in-law of May had apparently cleared four acres during the summer of 1831 and being "so pleased with the country" he returned to Devonshire to induce his brothers and friends to come. It was Balkwill that persuaded May to come. These two families came from Merton in Devonshire, a number of others also came from Merton as well as neighbouring parishes.

Balkwill and May took up land along the London Road and encouraged others to come. This marked the beginning of the "Devon Settlement" which was centred about two miles south of what is now Exeter around the Balkwill house which was known as the "Devonshire Inn". The Balkwill Inn or tavern served the area for many years. It passed from the Balkwills in 1855 when the tavern licence was transferred to Mr. McDonald.

The May homestead was the first billet for the itinerent clergy of the area and also the site of the first illicit whiskey still in the area. It is not reported whether the one had anything to do with the other. The whiskey still may in fact not have been illegal, it may be that Mr. May made more whiskey than he was legally allowed to make. The minutes for Usborne Township for February, 1857 note that May was suspended from making whiskey for twelve months. It was implied that he exceeded the legal limit for home stills.

Some of the other Devon men to come in the 1830's included Louis Holman, George Snell, Richard Handford and Thomas Bissett. These men and their families joined May and Balkwill along the London Road in the first three miles south of what is now Exeter in the "Devon Settlement". Those Devonshire men were the first of a very large number who came to the Exeter, Usborne and Stephen Township areas during the period 1830-1870. The size of the families of these early settlers helped the area grow. For example, Handford had three daughters and eight sons, and Holman had seven boys and five girls. Five families living on adjacent farms in the Devon settlement had fifty children among them.

There may be some argument as to who was the first Devonshire man to come to these parts. The honor goes to either John Balkwill or Richard Handford. James Handford in 1933, stated that his father Richard had "the honor of being the very first man to leave Devonshire for Canada". James also stated that Handford's letters home "brought out such an influx of settlers that for miles around his home the country was settled with Devon folk, a sturdy, honest, thrifty people, who made this part of the country blossom". So Richard Handford, "a quiet, energetic man", left Devon when he was twenty-one, "although his parents pleaded with him with tears not to leave dear old Devon". He was accompanied by William Rattenbury and the two of them reached Toronto with only two shillings between them. They worked in Peel County for a time, but later walked to Egmondville along the Huron Road. Handford went south and eventually took up three hundred acres first occupying Lot 7, Concession 1, Stephen Township which was about three miles south of where Exeter would be on the London Road. Rattenbury went on to the 'Corners' and is supposed to have named the spot Clinton after Lt. Gen. Lord Clinton on whose estate he had been a tenant farmer. Rattenbury operated the 'Rattenbury Hotel' there for fifty years. Handford built his shanty roofed with "basswood scoops" shortly after May and Balkwill had built their cabins. Richard married Dorothy Bissett, daughter of Thomas Bissett. The Bissetts had come from Merton, Devonshire, in 1834. Dorothy was clearly a pioneer woman. When her family landed in Toronto she evidently had decided to remain there to work. After a year the fifteen year old girl decided to rejoin her family. She walked the one hundred

and fifty miles alone from Toronto to Egmondville and south to the family's home in the Devon settlement. This walk was through mostly untamed forest at the time. She married Handford three years later.

The Handfords we noted, had eight sons and three daughters. One of these sons was James who lived to be Exeter's grand old man dying in 1936 at the age of ninety-eight. James recalled the pioneer days very well and told of the Indians who lived on the Handford farm, including Chief Sarponace, who with his men in 1860, did a war dance before the Prince of Wales when His Royal Highness visited London. The prince was delighted and amused. It was reported by W. H. Johnson that James and Richard Handford and Holman were also in the dance. Johnson also noted the following. "The next day great doings were planned for the Fair Grounds and the crowd was larger than the day before. These three young men were there to see with the rest. On account of taking part in the war dance the day before they wished to secure a place with the prince. As they pushed forward they were stopped by a member of the prince's bodyguard but nothing daunted they still moved closer. The soldier drew his sword and said he would cut off their heads if they dared to go farther. Dick Holman's fist collided with the guard's chin and the sword flew through the air. Then they realized what they had done. The two Dicks lost themselves in the crowd and James, who was younger, disappeared also."

The Handfords had excellent relations with the Indians, who would likely have been Chippawas or Neutrals. While Richard Handford and Louis Holman were away as militia men during the 1837 rebellion the Indians who lived on Handford's land came to the house and "cut the wood, fed the cows and did other chores". These Indians lived in the area for years earning a living by making baskets, axe handles and other items, they fished, hunted and trapped beaver as well. The Handford and Holman men learned much about the woods from the Indians, they learned Indian lore, the language, war dances and other Indian customs. James was an expert at logging bees, barn raisings and at cradling grain. He also won many ploughing matches as a boy winning his first competition in a field where the Exeter Opera House once stood; ploughing was done with a yoke of oxen. At this time even London was just a small community and James Handford could recall visits there. One occasion he went with his uncle Jack Bissett who took on a number of soldiers in battle. He "licked everybody", so the soldiers treated him to a "big drunk" and put him to bed.

The Handford name has been found in the Exeter area, for about one hundred and forty years. Tom Handford was the area's most well known horse dealer. Many of the Handfords have

left the area. Silas Handford lived with his family on Main Street in one of Exeter's oldest frame buildings on Main Street South; it was torn down in 1940. Silas' sons moved away, Augustus to Renfrew, another to Wisconsin and two to Sarnia. A Miss Handford who lived on Gidley Street was the last Handford to reside in Exeter.

Other early arrivals along the London Road included the Case family from Wicklow, Ireland. Thomas Case had ten sons and this family came in 1836. William Elder came in 1836. The Daymans came to the area quite early and may have been the third family to take up a location in what is now Exeter, joining McConnell and Willis. George McLeod, a "wood ranger" for the Canada Company came to the area from Scotland in 1843. These people, mainly from Devon, who came in the 1830's were the first pioneers of this immediate area. They were the forerunners of the later Devonshire people who came in the late 1840's and early 1850's. The years 1849-1858 were the peak years of Devon migration to North America. In those years 15,000 people sailed from the port of Plymouth. There was little additional settlement in what is now Exeter until the late 1840's, mainly, it seems because the land was low and wet. Aside from those of McConnell, Willis and Dayman, there were few other dwellings in what is now Exeter until the late 1840's. There must have been some others in the immediate area, however, since a school was erected in Francistown on the Usborne side in 1838. More will be said later about the school.

The clearing of the land proceeded although it was slow work; "you may swing the axe here from morning to night for a week before you let the daylight in upon you" it was said. Indeed, with "perfect strength, good fortune and good weather" it took three weeks to clear one acre but even then the stumps remained. These early Devon folk were joined by others from the same parishes as time went on. The Herns, Thomas and Elizabeth (Manning) came from Devon in 1852, their voyage took nine weeks and claimed the lives of two of their children, they eventually settled near Winchelsea. William Sweet and his wife Mary (Jones) settled south of Exeter in the late 1830's. William Horn from Sutcombe, Devonshire emigrated in 1843 and came to Usborne in 1853. Thomas Shute from Merton, Devon took up Lot 14, Concession 5 in 1852, he, like many other pioneers had a large family — in his case twelve. The Eacretts came to what is now Exeter in 1853; Charles Eacrett operated a harness and shoe making shop and built the Gould and Jory block. Bagshaw, Poplestone, Heywood (also from Merton Parish), Jones from Langtree, Devon, Tom Collins and William Sanders were other early arrivals to the immediate area.

Also coming from Devon, Morchard Bishop Parish, to be exact were the Southcotts and the Drews. William Drew came with his family in 1849 to London where his father, mother and two sisters died of cholera. He and four younger brothers and sisters walked to Exeter in 1854. Drew became one of the more active businessmen of the area, building many of the early frame houses. He also built the Commercial Hotel about 1860 and operated it for twelve years, then selling it to John Hawkshaw. He had a furniture business which he eventually sold to R. N. Rowe. It is said that Drew suggested the name 'Exeter Times' to White in 1873 when he came to found the paper. Charles Southcott came to Exeter in 1856 and opened a tailor shop. More will be said about Drew and Southcott later.

From Linton, Devonshire in 1849 came Richard Delbridge, he had been born on June 13, 1803. He was a shepherd in Exmoor Forest. Devon when he married in 1835. In 1849 he settled in Lobo Township and in 1853 he moved to Usborne, "a veritable wilderness", it is said that he had to "underbrush a road through the woods to allow his oxen to pass from Elimville to the lot which he had selected for his house". Richard is reported to have been "a quiet, industrious man, a kind husband, and an indulgent father, highly respected by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance". When he died on February 18, 1885, "his remains were followed to the grave by ninety vehicles filled with mourning relatives and sympathizing friends". One of his sons, John, became a well known Usborne farmer who frequently challenged his neighbors with feats of agricultural productivity, for example, he produced a two thousand pound beef cow once and published a challenge: "who can beat it?" He once brought to town a sixty-five pound pumpkin and again said, "who can beat it?" This John was the grandfather of the present Mayor of Exeter, Mr. John H. W. Delbridge.

We will mention one or two other early arrivals. Thomas Gidley came from London, England and settled on Lot 21, Concession 1, Stephen Township. He and his father Bartholomew cleared the bush and built a log cabin in what is now the centre of Exeter, this was in 1852. He later built a "large and stately house" on the end of Gidley Street. It is now occupied by Ted Jones. Thomas Gidley was a cabinet maker in London, England and he carried on his craft in Exeter. He started a chair and furniture factory in 1859, this factory was on the site of the Beaver Lumber Company buildings. Gidley also built the 'Oddfellows block' on Main Street. In addition he farmed in Stephen Township and was Reeve there from 1860-1863. He had three sons Richard, Charles and Samuel. He left his farm to the first named and the furniture factory to Charles and Samuel. Charles Gidley built the large house on William Street now occupied by Douglas Gould. The house was "built on a triple lot in a grove of pine and honey locust trees". Charles died on January 7, 1917, at the age of seventy-eight. Samuel moved to Duluth in 1904. Samuel's son Harry carried on the woodworking business. However, Harry Gidley is remembered more for his contribution to the musical life of Exeter since he managed the Opera House for many years and was leader of the Exeter Brass Band for years. Richard Gidley's wife (Honor Bissett) was the first person to be buried in the Exeter Cemetery. That was in 1866. The Gidley name is a well known one in the Exeter area and more will be said about the family later.

A few other settlers who came from Devon may be mentioned. The Mannings came in 1852 and mention is made of Richard Manning later. The Cornish family also came from Devon in 1852, one of them, John Cornish, was a framer and a builder who "showed no fear at the top of frames of the highest barns". Cornish was an expert with the broad axe. He was, in addition, an expert with the jug, it was said that he needed lots of whiskey at a barn raising. The Creech's, Chings, and Johns also came from Devonshire. John Johns came with his family from Langtree Parish, Devon in 1848 and settled on Lot 12, Concession 6, Usborne Township in 1850. He was the second settler in that Concession. It is reported that young Johns was the first pupil in the first Winchelsea School. There is also the report that Johns was a great axe man, one of his greatest pleasures in life was felling trees. Johns married Sarah Cudmore in 1873, the couple had six children, three girls and three boys (Richard, Sam and Charles). The Johns family have been well represented in Exeter over the years. David Johns was postmaster for many years, more is said about David Johns in a later chapter. Kenneth Johns served on the South Huron District High School Board for many years and was Chairman for much of the time. Walter Johns, became a classics scholar and eventually became President of the University of Alberta, a post he held for some years.

With these and many others coming from Devonshire during the period from the early 1830's to the 1870's it is not surprising that Devonshire place names like Exeter and Crediton appeared in the area. Nor is it surprising to find the following description of Exeter written in 1889 in the London Free Press:

> "Exeter is perhaps the most English place in Canada. One hears the broad dialect of Devonshire and Cornwall from the labourers heaping up the corporation mud that has been gathering all winter and it greets you from the merchant behind his counter and the butcher at his stall. It stares at you from the business signs where such names as Smallacombe, Bawden, Hamlin, Brimacombe, Snell and Trevithick are doing their share to perpetuate the memory of old Exeter,

Barnstable, Moulton, North and South, Crediton, Portsmouth and Truro'.

These early settlers' main line of communication was the London Road. One of the early stage drivers on the Road between London and Goderich was Jack Quick. He brought the news of the outside world and made small purchases for the settlers who would give him the money for the item to be purchased. Jack would as likely as not, spend the money on booze. He would, however, use the next settler's money to purchase the first one's item. He was always robbing one to pay for the other's goods, and consequently was always behind. But no one seemed to mind. More is found on the stage lines in the chapter on transportation.

Before we end this brief chapter on the earliest beginnings of Exeter we must comment on two more families — perhaps the two most influential families in the early history of Exeter. These are the Carlings and the Pickards. In 1818 Thomas Carling landed in Quebec City. He was twenty-one and had come from his native Yorkshire soil to seek his future in Canada. He reached York (Toronto) and from there he walked to Port Talbot through the Upper Canadian wilds. The fact that he killed a wolf with a stick on the way testifies to how wild it was. He purchased land from Col. Talbot. Later on he married Margaret Routledge and the couple took up residence on a farm near St. Johns in London Township. The isolation of the area is demonstrated by the fact that the marriage bans were published for three weeks on trees by the crossroads. Tom and Margaret were the first to be married in the area and the ceremony was performed by the Magistrate, Col. Burwell. The Carlings had five boys unfortunately only three lived

The Carling Home

Isaac Carling and Family

The eldest son was William, the youngest was John and the middle son was Isaac, named after Tom's brother who had been a non-commissioned officer in the First Life Guards and who had fought at Waterloo. John and William took over the small brewing business which their father had started more as a hobby than anything else, but the two boys felt the business had possibilities. Isaac was apprenticed as a tanner at E. W. Hyman's tannery in London. In 1846 Isaac married Ann Balkwill of the 'Devonshire Settlement' and in 1847 at the age of twenty-two he arrived in what was to become Exeter. Carling built a tannery near where the Tuckey Beverage plant is now located and he opened a general store where the Bell and Laughton building is located. Carling's arrival really marked the beginning of a village, it was not much but Carling "thought he saw a future for the spot". Carling became involved in local affairs almost immediately. In 1851 he was appointed an Inspector of Taverns along with George McLeod and Robert Walker. The three shared the stipend of one pound, ten shillings. Carling was also a Councillor for the United Townships of Usborne and Stephen. In 1867 he was Reeve of Stephen. Isaac later became the Member of the Legislative Assembly in whose 1866 journal it is noted that "Isaac Carling petitioned the government" that certain lands in the Exeter area be withdrawn from the Canada Company and sold to settlers. Carling unseated Gibbon in the contested election of 1867 to become South Huron's first M.L.A. after Confederation. He was, of course, Exeter's first Reeve. Carling eventually built the large house on Huron Street (now the hospital) Isaac had three sons and six daughters; his sons were Thomas, William and Isaac Jr Isaac Sr died in 1895 at the age of seventy having "had a stroke of paralysis" some years before "He bore his dreadful affliction with exemplary meekness and patience" This genial and hospitable gentleman passed "quietly away at his hitherto happy and beautiful home" in 1895 More is said about Mr Carling in other sections of the history of Exeter, he played a major part in the growth of Exeter, having been "the founder and first Reeve", Member of the Legislative Assembly, a prime mover in bringing the railway to Exeter and a most important member of the business community His importance to the community was witnessed by the presence of "over one hundred conveyances in his funeral cortege" As we said we will be discussing in later chapters more about Carling's work, this "earnest and sincere Christian and scrupulously honest and true gentleman" contributed perhaps more than anyone else to the emergence of a village, indeed, there is some indication that the name Carling's Corners was applied to the embryo settlement in the late 1840's and early 1850's

Richard Pickard

Of equal importance to Carling's contribution to Exeter's growth was that of James Pickard "Boss" Pickard as he came to be called arrived in the Exeter area "with little but his natural qualities to fit him for a fight with what was even then a comparative wilderness" The Pickards were from Ringsaat Parish in Devon and the family played a great part in Exeter's growth James opened a small store first just east of Exeter, then a larger business in the village We will discuss Pickard's business ventures later James became known immediately to the local officials and was appointed fence viewer in 1852 In 1854, Pickard became an Usborne Township Councillor and remained on the Council until 1857 He was also Pathmaster in Ward two, Usborne Township The Pathmaster "superintended" the work on the roads performed by Statute Labor within the beat for which the Pathmaster was responsible

James' brother Richard came to Canada in 1849 with other

members of the family. James seems to have arrived in Canada in 1834 at the age of fourteen, he died in 1904 at the age of eighty-three. Richard worked with James until the early 1870's when he went into business with George Samwell. The Pickard-Samwell businesses flourished, but again we will discuss this later. In politics James was a Tory and Richard a Grit. James was on the first Council and it was James Pickard who is reputed to have given Exeter its name after the great city in Devonshire, England.

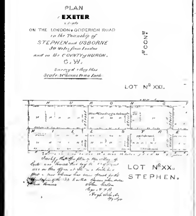
Dr. Hyndman B. V. Elliott Isaac Carling

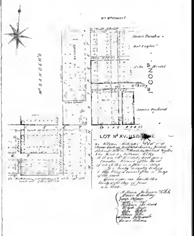
Three of Early Exeter's Leading Citizens

This chapter on the beginnings of Exeter shows that by the early 1850's there was an indication that a village was beginning. In May, 1855 a village plan was surveyed by William Robinson and registered in Goderich. On the plan is written, "I certify that this plan of the village of Exeter was recorded this day the third of August, 1855 in this office at eleven o'clock and that a new volume has been opened for the Registration of the lots marked thereon when deeded and received". The statement was signed by John Galt, Registrar of Huron and Bruce. This first survey had been urged by Isaac Carling and James Pickard and the other owners of land involved in the survey. These other owners were Joseph Acheson, William Sanders, Richard Taylor, John Randel, William Kelly, William McConnell, and James Vanstone.

This plan of the Village of Exeter was limited to the area shown on page 14 and 15.

It is not difficult to surmise the reasons for the street names. Main is obvious, James for James Pickard and Elizabeth for his wife, North is obvious, Ann Street for Isaac Carling's wife, Carling for the family, William for William Sanders, Market because the plans called for a market square in that area, Acheson for Joseph


PLAN
EXETER
ON THE LONDON & GODERICH ROAD
in the Township of
STEPHEN and USBORNE
30 Miles from London
and in the COUNTY of HURON.
C. W.
Scale 3 Chains to an Inch
1st CON.
LOT No XXI.
H U R O N
LOT No XX.
STEPHEN.


Wm McConnel
James Pickard
Mr SANDER'S
1st CON.
Wm Kelly
LOT No XV. USBORNE
A.D. 1855

Acheson, Mill because of James Pickard's saw mill in that section of the village. Mary is perhaps for Acheson's wife and John may have been for John Randel; the name Union Street is not readily explained. It may be noted that the County of Huron Gazeteer for 1863 suggested that the Canada Company had laid out a village plan in 1833 but no information exists to substantiate this statement.

The second village plan followed in September, 1855 when Thomas Gidley subdivided his land which lay between Main and Marlborough Streets and between Sanders and Victoria Streets. Richard Taylor added the third section to the village by surveying the area along the north side of John Street east to Bodman. In 1856 Exeter was extended to Hill Street.

Additional plans were developed in 1864 when Andrew McConnell had his land from the river north to the Thames Road surveyed. This plan had three buildings marked on it, one was Pickard's grist mill, the other two are open to question but the best guess is that one was W. H. Verity's house near where the Motel is now and the other on the corner must have been the Francistown hotel. There were other buildings, however, at this time. McConnell's own buildings, the store operated by John McDonnell, and Verity's foundry are some that were there.

Other plans followed, in 1875 John Southcott, in 1878 James Pickard, in 1881 and 1894 William Bawden, in 1895 Joseph Davis had plans of subdivision developed.

So in 1855, then, Exeter was first laid out in village lots and streets. In 1856 one of the above-mentioned plans showed thirty-one buildings. It is extremely difficult to identify all of these but it is possible to identify some. Among the buildings shown on this 1856 plan were Pickard's saw mill on Huron Street between Market and Acheson Streets, Pickard's store, and three others on Main Street between Huron and James Streets, William Drew's property on the corner of Huron and Main Streets had three buildings shown. There was a house on the corner of Huron and Andrew Streets, and there were fifteen buildings on the west side of Main between Huron and North Streets (Sanders Street). Of these thirty-one buildings, perhaps half were houses. This figure may be confirmed by a comment of Richard Pickard's wife who was an Elston and whose family came in 1856 to Exeter. Mrs. Pickard remarked that there were only fourteen houses in Exeter in 1856, this could not include the few houses in Francistown. One could assume then that there were about one hundred people.

Growth in 1856 continued. There were fifty-five sales of land in 1856 in the surveyed part of the village of Exeter. There had been only seven transactions in the period from August to December, 1855

The first notation of Exeter in the minutes of Usborne Township occurred on February 2, 1857 when the Council instructed the clerk to prepare a map showing the Village of Exeter. During the late 1850's and 1860's considerable growth occurred. Lovell's Directory claimed that Exeter and Francistown had six hundred people by 1858 but this figure seems to be considerably inflated. It is highly unlikely that there would be more than three hundred. By 1873 the growth was such that men like James Pickard and Isaac Carling led the movement to have Exeter incorporated as a village. In subsequent sections of this history of Exeter we will look at the various aspects of Exeter's growth.

chapter 2

"Main Street"

Exeter's Business Community

"Enterprising Exeter the hustlers for trade"

(The Exeter Times)

"Busy — well, I should think so! Ask any of its inhabitants if Mariposa isn't a busy hustling, thriving town"

(Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town)

"The town, I say, has one broad street commonly called Main Street On Main Street are a number of buildings of extraordinary importance — Smith's Hotel and the Continental and the Mariposa House, and two banks, to say nothing of McArthy's block (erected 1878) and Glover's Hardware Store with the Oddfellows Hall above it " Leacock goes on describing Mariposa and in so doing he could just as easily be describing a dozen Ontario towns of the last part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century

Change Mariposa's business names and Exeter becomes the town in the description "But once in the Main Street" writes a London Free Press writer in 1889, "you see signs of evident prosperity, comfort and enterprise Here and there are piles of brick and lumber, marking the places where new buildings will soon be in the course of erection Although fully two thousand in population, Exeter is satisfied to call itself a village, and go on in its steady way while places of half its population and about a quarter of its wealth call themselves towns and flourish in semi-urban grandeur with a mayor and full array of councillors The main attraction of Exeter is certainly its Episcopal Church " While the writer did not go on to comment on the Main street he could have noted at that time the large and imposing three storey place of business of James Pickard, the Samwell and Pickard block, Acheson's Central Hotel, Brimacombe's Mansion House Perhaps the writer quenched his thirst in the barroom of the Commercial Hotel and examined the merchandise in C and S Gidley's furniture store (with the Oddfellows' Hall above it) He may have purchased a bottle of spirits in one of several stores dispensing liquor or changed a bill in Molson's Bank He could have stopped in any of these places of business and others because in 1889 Exeter was experiencing its most prosperous decade In forty years or so the village had emerged from a tiny collection of buildings concentrated in the area between Huron Street and John Street to take on the appearance which has been retained basically ever since

While the business and industrial history of the community began with the establishment of McConnell's two mills in the early 1830's it was not until the late 1840's that there were any real signs that a village might develop In 1847 Isaac Carling came up the London Road and opened a general store and tannery as we noted in the previous chapter The next year saw Joseph Acheson, the first of that family to come to Exeter, open a shoemaking shop When Acheson began selling his boots and shoes there were only three or four log houses, Carling's businesses, and McConnell's establishments within the limits of what was to become Exeter Acheson's store which was on Main Street, possibly between Anne and John Streets burned in 1865 James Pickard arrived in 1851 or 1852 and opened the third store in Exeter, his large building was erected by 1855 or 1856 Shortly after Pickard's arrival a number of others came including Thomas Gidley, Thomas Bissett, who opened a livery barn and John McDonnell, who came from Cornwall and opened a store for Gunn and Gordon in Francistown, and William Sanders The latter two named, Sanders and McDonnell became postmasters in 1855, Sanders was appointed in the post village of Exeter and McDonnell was named postmaster of the post village of Francistown There is some question as to whether or not Francistown was in fact a post village The Hay post office which is in Exeter north now was not in Francistown in the early years, it was two miles north In 1863 James Murray was postmaster there McDonnell was named the area's first Issuer of Marriage Licenses in 1857, a post he held until 1886, in addition he was appointed Justice of the Peace succeeding "Squire" Thomas Gidley

By 1855 there was in existence the nucleus of a village centred on the London Road-Huron Street crossroads There were about thirty buildings, mostly on Main Street between Huron Street and North Street (later renamed Sanders Street) There were nine landowners in the area and these nine, including Carling, Acheson, Pickard, Sanders, William McConnell and four others had a village plan surveyed and registered on the third of August, 1855 This date could be taken as the date on which Exeter began as a village The name was probably chosen by James Pickard About the same time Francistown was showing signs of emerging as a village with John McDonnell's store, which he had purchased from Gunn and Gordon, and a few other buildings There is reason to believe that the hotel, later known as Walper's hotel also existed by the mid-1850's

Thus, by the mid-1850's the nuclei of two villages were emerging Francistown being the area around the London and Lake Roads intersection and extending south towards the river where the mills owned by McConnell were located and Exeter, which as was noted above was forming around the Huron Street and London Road crossroads The latter settlement was briefly known as Carling's Corners but was officially designated Exeter because of the increasing number of Devonshire people settling in the area James Pickard himself coming from Devonshire apparently urged that the name be adopted So the name of the great Devon city was carried to another part of the world by Devon men who had long before carried the name to New England as well The origin of the name Francistown is unknown

By 1860 Exeter had six stores These were William Trick, tinsmith, John Southcott, groceries, H G Broderick (General merchant) Carlings, Achesons, and Pickards There were four factories, three schools, three churches, Balkwill's Tavern, and a Masonic Lodge of which Isaac Carling was Worshipful Master The Masonic Lebanon Forest Lodge No 133 met on the "first Monday on or before full moon at William Balkwill's Hotel" There was also an Orange Lodge By the same time Francistown had two stores, a foundry (Verity's) and a fine hotel Both settlements had been designated post villages, as was mentioned in 1855 Also by 1855 a doctor had taken up residence in Exeter Dr John Hyndman arrived in the "Devonshire Settlement" south of Exeter in 1851, the year in which he graduated from the Toronto Medical College Hyndman's father Henry had been one of the leading men in the early settlement of Huron County having settled

A very early scene on Exeter's Main Street
Dr. John Hyndman is shown in this picture.

in Colborne Township near Goderich. The Hyndmans, Lizars and Dunlops were among the most important figures in the area, Hyndman was appointed the first Sheriff of the County. The family experienced a number of tragic events including the loss of a child and the destruction by fire of the family home. Henry Hyndman took his family back to Scotland but two of his sons returned to Huron County, one to Goderich and John to Exeter. A third son was killed in the "bloody trenches of Sebastopol" during the Crimean war. Dr. John Hyndman, then settled in Exeter in 1855 shortly after his marriage to Charlotte Quick, the daughter of one of the early settlers south of Exeter in "Devon". Dr. Hyndman practiced in Exeter until 1899 when he died. "His genial presence, courtly manner and kindly smile will be missed by all of us," noted the Times. Hyndman had five sons John, George, William, Garnet and Hugh, and one daughter Edith. The last two named boys became doctors with Hugh carrying on the practice in Exeter.

During the 1860's Exeter continued to develop. Among the businesses then in existence were the oldest six stores mentioned previously, that is the stores of Carling, Acheson, Pickard, Broderick, Trick and Southcott. In addition to these stores a number of other places of business had been established. Some of these were: Joseph Azers (grocer), John Backer (blacksmith), John and James Balkwill (tavern), William G. Bissett (tin and coppersmith), Charles Boulton (drugs and P.L.S.), Robert Brabson and W. H. Verity (foundry), William Box (cabinet maker), John Brawn (tailor), Mark Clark (boots and shoes), J. Clarke (general merchant), Richard Davis (blacksmith, carriage and wagon maker), Eldred Drew (cabinet maker, door sashes, blinds), William Drew (Commercial Hotel), C. and G. Eacrett (saddlers), William Fanson (harnessmaker), Robert Elston (grocer), Alex Dyer (woodwork), A. Freeman (general merchant), Gidley Brothers (cabinet makers and undertakers), James Gordon (tavern), William Grigg (tailor, book seller and bible depository), David Johns (tinsmith), Thomas Filton (clock and watch maker), J. and C. Southcott (merchants), Henry Lambrook (cabinet maker), Claudius Hamilton (druggist), John McConnell (tavern), James McNabb (cabinetmaker), James Sherbrooke (carpenter), Isaac Sinale (saddler), Sinclair Tait (cooper), John Treble (boots and shoes), John Trick (blacksmith), J. Vanstone (watchmaker), Dr. H. B. Winan (drugs).

Another early scene on Exeter's Main Street showing David Johns' Tin Shop probably at the corner of James and Main Streets. No information is available to explain the gathering.

By the early 1870's the following list was compiled giving Exeter two post offices, seven general stores, three hardwares, six groceries, two drug stores, two book stores, two jewelry stores, two shoe stores, three tin and stove smiths, four furniture stores, six harness shops, four tailors, one liquor store, several barbers, butchers, bakers, a confectionery, a music store, two photographers, two lawyers, six doctors, three banks, and two telegraph offices.

A century ago these places of business were generally located along Main Street which was beginning to bear some resemblance to the street as it is at present. A number of the brick buildings which are the landmarks along the business street had been erected. James Pickard's large store, Eacrett's block (now Gould and Jory), Samwell and Pickard's block (opened 1873), the Commercial Hotel, Grigg's building, Drew's store, Fanson's block, Dr. Browning's store, William Sanders' two stores, were among the brick stores already erected by 1873 and still standing. There were in addition to these, a good number of frame buildings housing other places of business. Over the next thirty years, most of these were removed or replaced by brick buildings, for example, the I.O.O.F. block was erected in the 1870's, David Johns erected the Lindenfield stores in 1878, the Public Utilities building was erected in the early years of the century, replacing three frame stores, this process continued until the present form of the street was achieved. With one or two major exceptions, such as the removal of the Central Hotel, the buildings have not changed to any marked degree since the early years of this century.

One hundred years ago, however, there were no sidewalks, not even boardwalks which were not constructed until 1876. The street was mud in the spring, dust in the summer and frozen ruts and ice in the winter. Many of the stores had overhanging porches which kept the area in front of the store dry. Hitching posts and rails lined both sides of the business section in front of the stores. In the mid-1870's boardwalks and boardwalk crossings were constructed in the business section. The walk was covered by the overhanging porches in front of the stores. Efforts at gravelling the road were made and the street was watered by a watering wagon. The merchants were charged a frontage levy for the watering of the Main Street. The mud was shovelled away in the spring but the street remained muddy or dusty or rutted, depending on the season until the pavement was laid. A few gas lights were placed on the street in the 1880's and in the 1890's a few electric lamps were located along Main Street. So aside from the buildings, the street's appearance has otherwise changed — the mud, boardwalks, lamps, covered porch areas, hitching posts, the dust and the board crossings have all disappeared. Even the names on the stores have changed. It is difficult to think of more than two names which were on store fronts a century ago and are still on stores; those names are Browning and Sanders. Some of the old Main Street business names can still be found along the street, for example, Southcott and Broderick. Many of the names such as Trick, Currelly, Treble, Fanson, Carling, Pickard, Samwell, Fitton, Grigg, Brimacombe, Drew, Hawkshaw, Gidley, Acheson, have disappeared from the business section entirely, indeed most of these names are not found in the town at all, although, there are still Achesons and Pickards in the town.

The growth of Exeter's business community from the period 1847 to 1873 was accompanied by a corresponding growth in the

community generally. As the growth occurred in both Exeter and Francistown, the two villages tended to grow together and were, of course, amalgamated in 1873 to form an incorporated municipality called Exeter.

The municipal history will be considered elsewhere in this book. In this chapter we want to concern ourselves with the industries, businesses and general commercial activity. The industries will be considered first. Industry in the village was concentrated in several areas, there was an important group of industries along the river, some in Francistown, others in the southwest part of Exeter including "Cottletown", others were located along Main Street and near the railway.

Little remains of many of these industries. For example the only reminder of industry in the southwest part of town is the name Mill Street and all that indicates the river industrial area is the name Old Mill Road. Each of the important industries is briefly described in the following pages.

The River Industries

1 McConnell's Grist Mill and Sawmill erected in the 1830's have already been discussed. It should be mentioned, however, that in the late 1850's the mill, still called McConnell's Mills was operated by George Hunt and R. Webb.

2 McLachlan and McCallum — Tannery.

This was started in 1876 on the south side of the river approximately where Mrs. J. Elliott's house is now located. Mr. McCallum was sole owner by the early 1880's. By 1899 the Tannery had been enlarged and consisted of a large frame building one hundred feet long with a brick warehouse, office, and engine room. McCallum employed eight skilled workmen at that time including a Mr. Isaiah Hall. He shipped his products all over Ontario to Manitoba, the Northwest, and British Columbia. In 1912 he gave up the tannery business and in 1920 the tannery was torn down by Tom Elliott who had purchased the property. This industry had provided local farmers with a market for hides. In addition to local hides the tannery used local hemlock bark as a source of tanning.

3 McLennan's Steam and Water Power Flouring and Grist Mill

This mill was located just east of where the railroad crosses the river today. A road ran along the south bank of the river past the tannery to McLennan's Mill. In the 1870's G. Willis was the chief grain buyer for the mill. Dry grain in 1875 was "gristed" for seven cents per bushel.

Water power for the mill came from a small dam which had

been built by the operators of the mill. Nothing remains today of either the mill or the dam.

A son of McLennan went on to become Professor Sir John McLennan of the University of Toronto. Indeed a number of Exeter boys became involved with the University of Toronto. This is illustrated by a quote from Charles Currelly's book, I Brought the Ages Home. Currelly himself an Exeter boy says:

> "About the year 1926, as I was putting on my gown to go on the platform at Convocation Hall, T. A. Russell came over to me and said, "It's not a bad showing for Exeter is it?" I looked around and saw Professor Ramsay, the Greek scholar and the oldest Exeter boy present, Sir John Willison, writer and Canadian correspondent of the London Times, Brigadier-General Mitchell, Head of the Faculty of Applied Science, Professor Sir John McLennan, Russell, himself, of the Board of Governors, Martin, the Prime Minister of Saskatchewan - - - his brother - - - myself, and two junior members of the staff."

4. The Exeter Steam Bending Factory

This mill was operated by James McNabb and was possibly located in McConnell's old mill since McNabb was there in the early 1860's after McConnell had sold out. Hay rakes, pea harvesters and spinning wheels were produced. The mill had a staff of four men. "Turning done to order" said the advertisements. This mill continued to operate until about 1880.

5. Kilpatrick's Woollen Mill

West of the bridge was a woollen mill operated by George and Ralph Kilpatrick. Opened in 1863, it burned down in 1875. During its operation it employed ten men in the art of carding, spinning, weaving and cloth dressing.

6. The Exeter Woollen Mill

Erected in 1876, this mill was located on the south bank of the river east of the bridge near Pickard's Grist Mill. Operated by Messrs. Wanless and Blain, the mill produced tweeds, blankets and full cloth. In 1880 the village granted the mill a subsidy of $4500. Van Egmond from Seaforth bought it in January 1884 and sold it to B. Muir in October of the same year. Muir shipped wool, blankets, and yarns all over Ontario and the West. He traded his "manufactured goods to wholesale houses in the east receiving in exchange ladies' and gents' underwear, stockings, and all kinds of manufactured wearing apparel". The mill, using local wool, thrived until 1906 when the Muir brothers closed down the operation. It was opened again as the result of the urging of the village council but its revival was short lived.

7. Pickard's Grist Mill, Exeter Mills.

James Pickard either built this mill in the late 1850's or early 1860's near where the present Public Utilities pump house is located, or he purchased the old McConnell mill and improved it. A dam made of wood could have been built by Pickard but it may have been erected earlier by McConnell. "Cap" Howard bought the mill from Pickard and ran it as a saw mill and power plant in the 1890's. After the turn of the century, the mill became a derelict building.

The Old Grist Mill

Cottletown and the Huron Street Industries.

1. James Pickard's Steam Saw Mill.

This industry, the first steam saw mill in the area, was erected on Huron Street, west of Victoria Park in 1855 by "Boss" Pickard. The importance of the mill to the economy of the area is illustrated by the production figures of 1869. In that year one and one-half million feet of lumber was produced from local timber supplies.

The mill was purchased in 1885 by John Gould to make staves for his cooperage. Gould's cooperage was located on William Street on the site of the present Legion building. In addition to the barrel-making factory Gould also operated an ashery for the production of lye and potash. John later sold the mill to James Gould. John was in business in the early 1860's.

2. The Sutherland and Innis Stave Company.

This company purchased the old mill from James Gould in

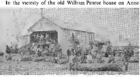
1899, tore it down and erected two buildings, the sawmill on the south side and the barrel factory on the opposite side The company opened another plant in Bryanstown at about the same time In the winter of 1900, the company cut three hundred thousand feet of elm in the Hay Swamp In 1903 Tom Creech was nearly killed when a saw broke, flying through the air close to Creech and crashing through the wall of the building By 1904 the elm stock had been so depleted that the company ceased to operate in Exeter and moved their equipment to the Ottawa Valley. The mill was leased for a time by J H Gilles from Michigan Gilles later operated another saw mill in an area north of the canning factory The building was eventually torn down, and today there is no indication of its existence except for the name Mill Street

3 Spackman's Cooperage

Typical Upper Canadian small town industries in the 1850's and 1860's included barrel making, soap and lye manufacturing John Spackman was operating a cooperage and soap-making establishment in the 1850's in Exeter His cooperage was on Huron Street East between Albert and Edward Streets on the creek, which is now enclosed in a large tile in that part of the town Like most industries, it utilized local raw materials, the barrels were made from local elm and the soap was made from wood ash diligently gathered from the homes of the village by Davie Gilles Spackman's little factory was torn down well before the turn of the century Hugh Spackman, John's son, later operated the hardware store at the corner of John and Main Streets The Spackman sign is still visible on the brick of what is now the F A May and Son store

4 Cottletown

In the vicinity of the old William Pearce house on Anne



The Sunderland and Innis Sawmill

Street was the manufacturing establishment of George Cottle. Cottle produced wooden harvest tools such as rakes, snaithes, grain cradles and fork handles. Ambrose Cottle eventually took over the business and took up residence in the old Pearce house. The factory was located immediately east of the house. Ambrose enlarged the operation by opening the Exeter cider mill shortly before the turn of the century, he made cider, apple butter and jelly. Mr. Cottle acquired one of the first gasoline engines to be used in Exeter to provide power for the turning factory and the cider mill. Ambrose was also one of the first to own an automobile in the village. It was red and had no top.

Cottle sold the two operations to J. A. and William Killough in 1903. The property was later acquired by S. J. V. Cann and he moved the equipment to the old Verity Foundry at the corner of Main and Wellington Streets, about 1920.

The Francistown Industries

1. G. Bolton's pump factory was on the London Road north of the crossroads in the early 1870's. Other than the fact of its existence, little else is known about this small industry.

2. An apple evaporator operated on the Lake Road for a number of years. It was opened in 1899 by C. Witmer and was later owned by S. M. Sanders, J. Brintnell and A. D. Clapp. The last owner was R. Laing, "The Apple King".

3. The Verity Plough Works

Beginning as a small foundry, this industry grew to become Exeter's most important manufacturing concern. No industry before Verity and only one or two since have employed as many men as Verity employed during the peak years in Exeter. Verity employed between seventy and eighty full-time men in the 1890's.

In 1857 William H. Verity, a Yorkshireman, and a Mr. Brabson started the "Francistown Foundry". Verity was a young mechanical engineer in 1857 and was appointed as an inspection engineer on one of the steam driven ships making a maiden voyage, crossing from London to New York in 1857. "On the ship there was a young lady named Mary Jane Fountain. Verity courted her during the crossing and promptly married her in New York when the ship arrived. The couple went to Buffalo and a few months later they moved to Upper Canada settling in Francistown where the Fountains had settled. There Verity entered into partnership with Brabson "For the manufacture of plows, sugar kettles, horse powers, straw cutters, saw outfits ,box and cook stoves".

During his beginning years, Verity made all his patterns and machinery himself with "rudimentary equipment" including a drill lathe, boring mill, vise, and "a horsepower with a gear fifteen feet in diameter" The power for this "huge contraption was furnished by farmers' teams which used to come in twice a week when heats were taken off" Verity eventually bought Brabson out and the firm came to be known as W H Verity and Sons Foundry

Verity's four sons, Robert H., William J., Percy E and Charles F all eventually entered the business "Robert and William operated the big hand press which formed the mold boards of the plows .... The furnace and press were outside in the open beside a creek in which a twenty-foot hole had been dug" The hot mold boards were cooled in this little pond In 1869, the firm employed twelve men in the manufacture of Balls Ohio Self Rakers, Wood's Reaping Machine, plows, other agriculture implements and stoves Verity stopped making stoves in the 1870's; he sold his stove business to John McCleary of London Twenty years later the firm employed over forty "mechanics" For over thirty years "Canada's Great Plow Maker" operated his business in Francistown The site of this Francistown foundry was at the corner of Alexander and William Streets

In 1889, the Messrs Verity moved their expanding business from Exeter North or Francistown to the corner of Main and Wellington Streets, site of the present Liquor store The new works extended from Main Street eastwards to Andrew Street The village council generously granted the firm exemption from taxation in 1889 and the Times approvingly commented on the council's decision, saying that "the employees receive good wages, the greater part of which is left with our merchants every Saturday A few more manufacturing institutions will place Exeter in the position of which she is so deserving"

After establishing the firm in this new location the Messrs Verity increased their staff to sixty as orders for plows from Manitoba came in In 1889, the Foundry shipped nearly one thousand plows to the West. In those days the foreman of the forge was Robert Webster who oversaw the production of the famous Verity plow The next few years saw the business steadily expand to the point where it was the most important industry in the entire area.

In 1892, however, the village was disturbed by news that the largest industry in the community was about to close and move to Brantford The Massey-Harris firm had made offers to Verity That company wanted Verity to manufacture all of their plows and had given "The Messrs Verity flattering inducements to locate in either Toronto or Woodstock"

Amalgamation in the spring of 1891 had resulted in the formation of the Massey-Harris Company Limited A further amalgamation occurred in December when Massey-Harris merged with the Patterson-Wisner firm "Hart Massey was the dominating figure" in the new corporation

The mergers continued however, and in 1892 the Massey-Harris Company acquired forty percent interest in the Verity Plow Company Mr Verity proposed that his firm remain in Exeter Exeter businessmen raised ten thousand dollars to assist in the expansion of the firm, council offered tax exemptions and promised to approach the railroad with a demand that a spur line be built to the works These offers were taken to Massey-Harris by the Veritys who had promised "to take a strong stand in favor of Exeter" Unfortunately for Exeter, the Verity Works could not be retained and in October of 1892 the last fifteen carloads of machinery had left the Exeter station for Brantford, the new location of the Verity Ploughworks In Brantford the firm took over the plant formerly occupied by the Wisner Company The Works were gone and with them many Exeter families It would seem that the major factor in the decision to move was the lack of satisfactory railway service and the need for centralization With the loss of the Works Exeter's growth was seriously restricted, indeed the village never recovered from the loss of this industry until the Second World War In addition to the Veritys some of the other families who moved to Brantford were the Rantons, Eacretts, Braunds, McKays, McLaughlins, and many others In all over thirty families left Exeter including over one hundred and fifty people

W H Verity had lived in Exeter for forty years The Verity home was located north of the river about where the motel is now located, it was one of the town's finest houses and "stood on an eminence like some fairy castle in splendid isolation" The Verity home was one of the first in Exeter to have a furnace installed to heat the whole house, this was in 1884 The Veritys were Methodists and Conservatives The family played a major role in the activities of the village With the move to Brantford, W H Verity became Vice-President of the Verity Plough Company of Brantford, Verity died, however, in late 1892 a short time after the move H A Massey became President Mr Verity was the father of twelve children including Mrs T R Carling and Mrs R E Pickard His son, W J Verity became the general manager and Vice-President of the Verity Plough Works and later a Director of the Massey Harris Company and

Vice-President of the Dominion Foundry and Steel Company. R. H. Verity, another son, eventually became General Superintendent of the Massey Harris Company in Toronto. Charles Verity was foreman of the molding room and Percy was Chief Pattern Maker. The Verity Company retained a separate identity for over twenty years. Eventually, however, the Massey Harris and Verity Companies were fully amalgamated in the Massey Harris Company. The Verity family continued to play an important part in the management of this firm. In 1897 "while the plant was working twenty-four hours a day on a rush order for Australia, an explosion occurred in the paint shop resulting in a fire which wiped out the entire works". A new plant was built in Brantford in 1897 and this factory gave Verity the "best equipped plow works in North America".

In 1893 the Verity buildings in Exeter were purchased by the Murray brothers of Wingham, who operated a foundry in the buildings. The Exeter Electric Light and Power Company acquired that section of the Verity building on Main Street and developed a power plant there which provided electricity for the village until 1915 when Ontario Hydro came in. (See the chapter on municipal services for more information on the power company.) In 1913 the Exeter Manufacturing Company was established with a loan of ten thousand dollars from the village of Exeter. This company, founded by W. J. Murray, a Mr. Zeig and a Mr. Hanna intended to utilize the old foundry building to produce plow points, road drags, cement machinery and other road machinery, did not have any degree of success and ceased operation in 1914 or 1915.

S. J. V. Cann acquired that part of the Verity foundry that had been used as the power plant and established a cider mill in the old building. Cann also operated one of the first gas stations out of this building. The building gradually became derelict and was eventually torn down by the Ontario Government to make room for the liquor store. With the disappearance of this building and its tall chimney, one of Exeter's landmarks was gone. The other Verity buildings, to the east were torn down by the canning factory and the materials utilized at the factory. "King" Davis eventually acquired the land and erected houses on the site. Today nothing remains as evidence of the old Verity Ploughworks.

4 Fenwick's Flour and Grist Mill

After attempting to work a "poor sand farm lying along the banks of the Black Creek", Mr. Fenwick, "a severe, dyed-in-the-wool Englishman", decided it was time for "his emancipation" from his groping, sand-beetle life". As his son later suggested, Fenwick felt it was time to go to work with his mind instead of with his muscles so he moved his family to Zurich and operated a grist mill and saw mill there for a time. The bigger village of Exeter, however, beckoned him and he packed up his wagon and took his family to Exeter where in 1875 he opened a flour and grist mill on the north west corner of the Francistown crossroads on property owned by Abel Walper. Fenwick's son George describes the family's entry into Exeter as follows:

> "Our entry into Exeter during the summer of 1875 behind our span of bays and in a light wagon was a characteristic one for that period. Neither was it attended with any degree of pomp or ceremony. We (us kids) were chattering and exclaiming like a surprised band of caged monkeys. Restraint — an unknown quantity with us — had completely disappeared into the deepest oblivion. For here at last was the promised land, the new haven of our speculations, a fruitful field through and by which we could exercise our innocent deviltry. We had completely forgotten the admonition of brother Bill back along the road before entering Hensall when he cautioned:
>
> "Now you kids don't want to look and act like a lot of jayhooks when we reach Exeter. Look and act as if you knew something." Good advice, but about as effective as trying to wash the face of the moon with a cup of water. For as we rumbled along the road leading into Francistown, there bulking large in the distance was Father's new mill — still in the course of construction — which brought forth many yaps and yells and exclamations of astonishment and delight."

The mill was an imposing sight being four stories high. The opening of the mill was celebrated in a grand style in the Walper Hotel saloon which became a favorite haunt of the farmers who brought their grain to Fenwick's mill. After the local gentry received their money from Fenwick for their grain, they crossed the road to spend it in Walper's saloon on "stale beer, cheese and bologna sandwiches".

Fenwick evidently gave James Pickard some stiff competition in the milling business since it is recorded that Fenwick "aroused the anger of The Boss". Until Fenwick's opening Pickard had dominated the milling business in the area.

Fenwick's mill "contrary to all predictions succeeded" and he shipped flour all over Western Ontario and Quebec. The mill's operations were directed by the head miller, August Ennic and Tom Pennell, the chief engineer and fireman. He had his own teams and freight wagons for drawing flour to Goderich, Hensall, Seaforth and other surrounding villages. Victor Muthart was one of the drivers.

5 The Flax Mill

This mill was located on the Lake Road west of the Francistown crossroads It was first erected in June, 1877 by Messrs Paton and Dorward These gentlemen sold the business to J Sweitzer in the mid 1880's for twenty-five hundred dollars Sweitzer had some trouble with a female admirer shortly after he acquired the flax mill In 1886 it was reported in the Times that a lady named Elizabeth Spawn tried to burn the mill down after Sweitzer had refused to marry her Constable Gill had to arrest Elizabeth and send the poor girl to the Goderich Gaol where she was able to spend some time pondering upon her unfortunate love life

The mill used locally grown flax which was pulled by local labor Flax pulling was hard work and in July, 1894 the pullers walked out of the fields and struck for higher wages Anarchy in Exeter! The Times was appalled The editor went so far as to compare the "wicked strikers" to those involved in the recent "Great Strike" in the United States The workers were given a small increase G and J Kellerman who bought the mill in 1900 averted another strike by increasing the pay to the munificent sum of twenty-five cents for a twelve hour day From seven in the morning until seven at night the flax was pulled, tied in sheaves, loaded on wagons and taken to the mill where it was threshed for seed The fibres were then spread on the ground to rot after which the fibrous material was taken to the factory for preparation of the flax fibre

In 1920 the mill burned and William H Johnston who moved to Exeter in 1920 after a teaching career wrote a poem about the flax mill fire, in the poem he describes how the flax mill burned but how the flaxmen "raced and worked and toiled beyond compare" to save the storehouse Johnston wrote how "we hope to see a better mill arise" and in 1921 a new mill was built by the Ontario Flax Company In 1923 Owen Geiger purchased the mill Geiger continued to employ Joseph Davis as mill manager, Davis had managed the mill for over thirty years and had worked for all of the mill owners Davis died in 1961 at the age of 93 Geiger closed the mill in 1930, it was never reopened The last use for the buildings was as storage for Cann's Mills This storage barn still stands

6 Francistown gristmills

John MacDonald and the Hutton Company are listed as the operators in the 1860's This mill may later have been McLennan's Mill

Other Industries and Manufacturing

There were a number of other manufacturing activities worth mentioning. The Gidley Furniture factory was one of Exeter's early industries having been established by Thomas Gidley in 1859. The following is taken from an item in the Times-Advocate of June 1, 1944. Harry Gidley, the last of the Gidleys to live in Exeter died that year and the article from which the following is taken was written at that time:

> "Thomas Gidley had been a cabinet maker and a member of the cabinet guilds in London, England, and it is on record in the London City Hall, that he had repaired the London City gates . . .
>
> Seeing the great need for household furniture in this new land where tables, benches and bedsteads had all to be made by hand, he started a chair and furniture factory . . .
>
> Before emigrating to Canada Thomas Gidley had served an apprenticeship of seven years and became a master workman . . . He brought his tools with him and many of these fine hand-working steel and wooden planing and carving tools are in Harry Gidley's shop today."

Thomas Gidley's shop was built in 1859 where the Beaver Lumber Company's buildings now stand. He took his three sons Richard, Charles and Samuel into the furniture business.

> "From the beginning they found it difficult to supply the pressing demand for household furniture and the venture proved to be a profitable one."

The Gidleys also built the so-called "Oddfellows Block" and Samuel and Charles operated both a furniture and undertaking business there. Harry Gidley is remembered in Exeter for his musical ability and his contribution to Exeter bands; he was leader of the Exeter Brass Band and founder and leader of the Exeter Orchestra. Harry "filled orders for individual hand polished pieces and fancy articles in woodwork for customers in Exeter and from coast to coast . . . Harry made many hand polished coffee tables solid and durable . . . The tops were made of beautiful curly maple that he salvaged from a lumber pile that was about to be used as firewood. The trim on the legs and the inlaid portions of the top were black walnut obtained in Port Franks from George Hurdon, son of the former Exeter banker N. Dyer-Hurdon, where it had lain in the bottom of the river for decades".

Furniture made by Thomas Gidley, his sons, and grandsons may be found in various places throughout Canada and the United States.

The Gidleys sold their first place of business in 1888 when they moved to the Oddfellows Block. On the site of this first Gidley fur-

niture factory was established a business which proved to be one of Exeter's most durable. The Ross and Taylor Planing Mill was started in 1876 by the Ross brothers and Davidson. In February 1877, J. W. Taylor joined Ross in the business which was then located on Andrew Street where H. Bishop later built a house. In 1888 the firm purchased the Gidley Bros. Factory and in 1903 the firm built a new brick building on the site and purchased John Willis' lumber yard which was located just across the street. Willis had established his lumber business about 1870. Ross and Taylor continued to expand, and in 1905 they constructed a new saw mill and large drying kiln. That was the year that the Sutherland and Innis mill closed, Messrs. Ross and Taylor felt that the village needed a saw mill so they had one erected. It was also in 1905 that the Ross and Taylor Company Limited was incorporated. In that year the company employed ten steady men and several part time employees. The books for 1905 showed five thousand dollars paid in wages, seventeen thousand dollars for stock, and three thousand for freight. The manager of the mill from 1908 to 1931 was J. R. Hind.

In 1931 the business was sold to Messrs. Morse and Gordon by the remaining partner J. W. Taylor. Ross died in 1913. Taylor died in 1933. The business passed through several ownerships including that of Messrs. Henderson and Sweitzer. A. J. Sweitzer erected a new building in 1947. In recent years the business was acquired by the Beaver Lumber Company, this company occupies the site at present.

Shortly after the turn of the century the Conner Brothers Machine Company was opened at the corner of William and Wellington Streets. The Conners manufactured air cooled engines and various other items of a mechanical nature, including railroad velocipedes, the Conner Washing Machine, and at least one automobile. This may have been the only car ever built in Exeter although a man named Kurtze once requested a loan of five thousand dollars from Council in order to erect a motor car plant in Exeter. Nothing, as far as it is known, ever became of this proposal. The Conner car, however, did run; Luther Penhale once took it for a drive and the car heated up so badly that it could not be driven.

In 1920 J. G. "Goldie" Cochrane from Kitchener purchased the Conner Machine Company and operated the business as Cochrane's Machine Shop. Cochrane had an interesting sports background and contributed greatly to sports, particularly hockey, in Exeter. His sports activities are commented on elsewhere in this book. Cochrane's shop was closed before the second war.

A small manufacturing establishment existed at the corner of James and Andrew Streets in the 1870's; Messrs. Funston and

Hillard operated a Carpenter and Joiner Shop there for a number of years. The Heaman Rake and Cradle Factory operated a mile south of the village until it burned in 1884. Richard Manning's Cheese Factory was established fairly early in Exeter's history. Manning was one of the early arrivals, coming in 1855 or 1856. The date that he began operating his factory is not known but it is known that in 1869 this factory manufactured fourteen tons of cheese. Manning had sixty cows in his own stable and no doubt purchased additional milk. In the 1890's The Exeter Butter and Cheese Manufacturing Company, a subsidiary of the Davis and Rankin Company of Chicago, operated in Exeter. According to one report they claimed to have a one thousand cow capacity. It may be that this company took over Richard Manning's factory although this is not known nor is the location of the factory known. A. Q. Bobier's Creamery was another important dairy products operation in Exeter. Snell Brothers Pork Packing Plant was started in the 1890's in James Pickard's old brick building on James Street. Louis Day came from London to be foreman of the plant.

For several decades the Exeter Roller Mills was one of Exeter's important business concerns. A grist and flour mill was started in 1890 by Messrs. Rollins and Williams. Their mill burned in 1892 and the partners purchased the old Pickard Mill, together with the house and adjoining land, the house being the one now occupied as the Ausable Authority Office. A price of one thousand dollars was paid by Rollins and Williams for all of this property. Instead of reopening the old mill, however, Rollins and Williams erected a new mill in 1894 on property purchased from Mr. Hooper on Main Street. They sold the mill to Cobbledick and Sons in 1898 who had been in the grain business. They sold the business to the Harvey Brothers, Thomas, J. S. and W. H., in 1902.

The Harveys renovated the mill, installing three new choppers and began what was to remain a very successful business for many years. By 1906 the mill was flourishing for in that year the Harveys shipped ten thousand sacks of flour to the United Kingdom alone. To meet its production schedule the mill ran day and night. There was a large market for their Welcome Flour, Pure Manitoba Flour and Star Flour throughout Western Ontario as well as other points in Canada and abroad. In addition to using some local soft wheat the mill used thousands of bushels of hard western wheat each year.

This large volume of wheat, which was brought in each year amounted to as much as two hundred and eighty thousand bushels in some years, plus the large shipments of flour going out, prompted serious agitation by the mill and the village council for the construction of a railway siding to the mill. It had long been felt in Exeter that the railroad and the station being "far from the leading hotels and places of business" was in an "unhandy spot". It will be recalled that it was inadequate railway service that contributed to Verity's move and later the Harveys found the railway service less than adequate. No line was ever built to the mill, however.

By the 1930's the mill was beginning to decline. A combination of factors, including the death of the original partners, the unsuccessful management by those who followed and perhaps most important the severe competition from the large flour milling concerns, resulted in the eventual closing of the flour mill. It was sold to the Cann family who subsequently have established a prosperous feed mill operation.

Messrs. Dyer, Oke, and Howard operated the Exeter Planing Mill, Sash, Door and Blind Factory which began in the 1860's on Wellington Street. In 1901 the mill burned and at a public meeting following the fire Council was instructed by the ratepayers present to lend the firm six thousand dollars, in order that the mill might be rebuilt. The loan was to be conditional upon the consent of "rival institutions" being forthcoming. The only competitor to give consent was the firm of Ross and Taylor, consequently, the burned mill could not be rebuilt. The creditors had to settle for fifty cents on the dollar.

The Exeter Salt Works began production from a well fifteen hundred feet deep located immediately west of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway near the present canning factory in the 1880's. Among the chief shareholders in the company were W. G. Bissett, T. B. Carling and D. Mills. Most of the salt produced was sold in the immediate area. In 1924 the well was purchased by Mr. Ransford from Clinton who operated it for a few years until the frame building housing the works burned. Today only the tall chimney marks the site of this industrial activity. It is worthy of note that the Salt Company sent an exhibit of salt and brine to the Paris Exhibition and received a diploma for the exhibit.

Other small industries could be mentioned. G. and J. Brooks Carriage Factory, George Davis Marble Works located just north of the Main Street Methodist Church, Hazelwood Brothers — Acetylene Gas Machines are some that come to mind. Eldred Drew, William Drew and John Drew are names that are associated with furniture making in Exeter. The location of the various Drew operations is somewhat confusing and more is said later in the chapter about the Drews but William's shop and store apparently were found where Dinney Furniture is now and Eldred's shop was at the rear of Mace's store on the west side of Main Street. Eldred Drew employed from nine to fifteen men in his cabinet making shop in the 1870's. Israel Smith was Exeter's first bicycle maker. W.

D. Weekes established the Exeter Marble Works in 1878 on the premises now occupied by Pryde Monuments. Weekes was chairman of the Exeter Library Board for twenty years. W. D. Weekes designed a granite monument for a New Brunswick Company to send to the Paris Exhibition early in the century. The monument won a silver medal. There was another Marble Shop operated by George Davis north of Main Street Church; it was torn down in April 1901.

John Trick built carriages, wagons, buggies, sleighs, cutters and did general blacksmithing. He had two buildings on Main Street somewhere south of Ross and Taylor, one building was brick and measured forty-two feet by twenty-four feet. The other was frame and was eighty feet long and twenty-two feet wide. Trick's shop employed ten men which made it an important village industry from the 1850's when it was established until it was purchased by James Dignan, a former apprentice of Trick's in 1874.

Richard Davis, another blacksmith had a large shop. He began working in Exeter in the late 1850's or early 1860's and eventually built up a business that employed nine men to work his four forges. His shop was at one time located where the post office is now and measured sixty feet by twenty-five feet. The numerous other blacksmiths that had shops in Exeter will be considered in the chapter on transportation. Blacksmith shops are mentioned here because they often were in the small towns and villages of Ontario important manufacturing operations.

Isaac Carling's Tannery which was established on the corner of Anne and Main Street in 1847 remained an operating industry in Exeter for several decades using local hides and local hemlock and oak as a source of tannin.

The Jackson Manufacturing Company was owned by Thomas Jackson of Clinton. He had factories in Seaforth, Goderich, Clinton and Hensall as well as Exeter where the operation was located in James Pickard's old store. The company began in Exeter in 1911 and produced clothing of various kinds, including overalls, suits, overcoats and army trousers during the First World War. G. W. Davis was manager and A. Perritt chief cutter. The clothing appeared under the label "Lions Brand". In 1923 the firm was bankrupt and the Exeter branch was purchased by S. M. Sanders. It operated as the S. M. Sanders Manufacturing Company from 1923 to 1929 when Sanders sold the old building to "Sandy" Elliot who used it at that time as a garage and automobile showroom. Elliot still owns the building which now contains apartments and stores including the Canadian Tire Corporation.

An important Exeter industry traces its origins to the year 1887 when J. G. Jones leased the Winchelsea general store from Fred

Godbolt. Jones had been a school teacher first at Khiva and then at the Eden school but had decided that there was a better living to be made in business. He operated the Winchelsea store, where he developed an extensive dry goods and grocery business as well as establishing an impressive business in poultry and seeds, until 1905 when he moved to Exeter. He purchased E. J. Spackman's stores on the corner of Main and John Streets. In 1908 he expanded southwards and purchased Farmer's grocery business which was located where Smythes Shoe Store is now. Jones established a seed milling plant in this building. Jones purchased the Farmer liquor store in 1915, this frame building had been the old Bible Christian Church and was by 1915 becoming dilapidated. Jones moved this building to the rear of his stores and housed poultry there, he erected the brick building which is now the Town Clerk's office. By 1915 Jones owned the land and buildings from John Street south to the bank.

J. G. Jones died in 1927 and his son Hubert expanded the seed business to the point where in 1947 a new, modern seed mill was erected on John Street on property acquired from J. G. Dow. This property had been the site of the well known horse barns operated by McDonnell and Bawden and later Dow. Hubert Jones had been joined by C. S. MacNaughton and the new seed business was called The Jones and MacNaughton Seed Company. The company thrived for about twenty years and was eventually sold. As a result of various transactions the business is now owned by the Maple Leaf Milling Company. Further comments are found on later pages about other Jones businesses.

Other manufacturing activities in Exeter included such pioneer industries as the shipping of leached ashes and the shipping of ice from the river. The Times noted on February 2, 1888 that "the ice on the river is very thick and of good quality. The hotels and others are at present engaged in putting away a supply for summer's use."

This brief summary of Exeter's past industrial and manufacturing activity indicates a number of interesting facts. It demonstrates that a small Ontario town had a considerable variety of manufacturing. This variety reveals the degree of local self-sufficiency that existed since a small town like Exeter did manufacture a great list of items such as agricultural tools, wagons, furniture, salt, flour and so on. Agricultural products were processed in the village which was the local market centre. It is also noteworthy that in the last half of the nineteenth century industrial activity in Ontario was decentralized and spread over the towns and villages of the province. Naturally the less complete transportation network contributed to this but so did the absence of as many large corporations. The small entrepreneur characterized the small towns. In Exeter the industries noted on the previous pages were mainly smalloperations. The Verity Plough Company did grow to become a good sized industry and the founder W. H. Verity and his sons did become important figures in the industrial history of Ontario. Most small manufacturers did not, however, achieve the level of success of the Verity company. In Exeter many of the concerns noted provided a good living for their owners and contributed to the economy of the village providing a variety of employment opportunities. Few of the industries established in Exeter exist at the present time having succumbed to the centralizing trend in Ontario, to the changing technology and to the competition of the large corporation.

One industrial operation which has survived in Exeter for many decades, however, is the canning factory. Today this is Exeter's largest industrial activity and can show almost continuous operation since its beginning in 1906. In that year the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company was established. The company was started initially as a result of Reeve A. Q. Bobier's leadership in getting the factory started. It is true that both the Times and the Advocate had been urging for years that Exeter obtain a canning factory and it is also true that a man named Wagner had started a small cannery in 1904. However it was Reeve Bobier who must be credited with providing the initial stimulus. Bobier interested a group of local businessmen in the idea of a canning factory and then he convinced Council to lend ten thousand dollars to the group to provide additional capital to get the factory built. The ratepayers approved a loan for the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company by a vote of three hundred and thirty-seven to twenty-seven and the Directors of the Company received the ten thousand dollar loan from the village.

Shares were sold at twenty-five dollars each to local businessmen with most of the shares being purchased by the following men who formed the first Board of Directors, these were Joseph Snell, who was manager of the Sovereign Bank, R. G. Seldon, J. G. Jones, S. Martin, J. Hunter, C. H. Sanders, W. D. Sanders, Thomas Harvey and A. Marchand. The company first bought Wagner's small cannery and redeemed for thirty dollars each the two hundred shares which Wagner had sold. A site was then selected for the factory. The site selected was the property at the rear of John Mitchell's Temperance House, near the Railway on Wellington Street. The company also purchased the Mitchell Temperance Hotel and removed the building using the salvaged material to erect two storage sheds. The new factory building was one hundred and seventy feet by forty feet, the boiler room's chimney was twenty-five feet high. The contractors were G. Heaman and J. Jewell. Production began in 1906 or 1907 under the management of "chief processor" C. F. Seawright who left in 1911 to go to Philadelphia. In that year S. M. Sanders took over as manager. The first brand canned was "Excelsior Peas" which were packed in some of the first "sanitary cans" used in Canada, these new cans were introduced in 1912. The peas grown locally were purchased from the growers for one and one-half cents per pound.

By the 1920's the ownership of the firm was concentrated in the hands of various members of the Sanders family as a result the Board of Directors was largely composed of Sanders. There were several Sanders families in Exeter. William Sanders was one of the early arrivals in Exeter another was Samuel Sanders Sr. who also came quite early to Exeter from Devonshire. Both acquired land on the west side of Exeter, Samuel farming on the west edge of town for some years. Samuel raised a family of four sons and four daughters, the sons were Samuel M., W. D., D. B., and J. A. The first two named played prominent roles in the affairs of Exeter for many years. When old Sam died in February, 1917, at the age of eighty-two it was remarked in the Advocate that "one after another the pioneer residents are passing to their rest, leaving only the lustre of their untarnished names and the example of their lives for the guidance and emulation of the younger generation".

Three of Samuel's sons, W. D., J. A., and S. M. became major shareholders in the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company and were Directors of the Company. The other four Directors in the 1920's were C. H. Sanders and R. N. Creech of the Advocate, F. W. Gladman and L. H. Dickson. Of the seven Directors named above only six were shareholders and these six held all of the shares of the Company.

In 1923 the Board made the decision to sell the Company to the Canadian Canners Limited of Hamilton. Luther Penhale was named manager in 1924. Penhale had various schemes in addition to his immediate job of managing the factory. For example, one year he had thirty tons of wild strawberries harvested in the area and shipped to Hamilton for processing. Penhale eventually assumed a supervisory role with the Canadian Canners. Over the years the other managers of the local factory have been B. R. Bartow, John Bales, E. J. Green, H. K. Penhale, D. Graham and J. Urquhart the present manager. These men have supervised the factory's operations which have included the processing of peas, corn, carrots, sauerkraut, tomatoes, apples, pears and asparagus.

In 1943 the factory was rebuilt by contractor Roy Dewar and in 1944 a pipeline was built from the Exeter dam to the factory. In the 1950's the Morrison Dam was built under the direction of the Ausable Conservation Authority and supported strongly by the

Town of Exeter because it guaranteed the Canning Factory a steady supply of river water for cooling and washing The town also constructed a filtration plant to filter the water going to the factory With these expenditures having been made the town was understandably concerned in 1958 when it was rumored that the factory would close and the rumors appeared to be true when the factory did not operate during the 1958 canning season It appeared that the famous Aylmer label might not be shipped again from Exeter The factory had provided an important market for local agricultural products and provided employment to the community

In 1959 it was announced that the California Packing Company had acquired the controlling interest in Canadian Canners Limited It was with relief that Exeter learned that the new company would not only reopen the Exeter plant but also planned a program of improvement and modernization A number of improvements, enlargements and additions have since been made to the factory which continues to operate as a branch of Canadian Canners having added to the traditional Aylmer label the California company's Delmonte brand

So since 1906 this industrial operation has been an important contributor to the economy of the area There are few people left who worked for the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company when it started in 1906, one of these is Mr J Elliott who worked for the old company in 1906 and who was employed in the factory for well over fifty years Since this was written Mr Elliott has died

In addition to the canning factory there have been many businesses and industries in Exeter which are directly related to agriculture Indeed, the real economic base of the town has always been agriculture Some other business activities in Exeter whose basis was agriculture are noted below W H Levitt operated a produce business on Main Street north of where the I G A is now Levitt dealt in butter, eggs, feathers, vegetables and other produce This business was eventually acquired by W C Allison and after that by Canada Packers Seth Winer's turnip plant, Wein Brothers, Exeter Rutabaga Company, Exeter Produce, various hatcheries, farm implement and machinery dealers further illustrate the agricultural base Mention was made previously of various cheese and butter processors, other creamery operators in Exeter were A Q Bobier, W G Medd, William Hatter, N Stanlake Today only the Exeter Dairy processes milk in Exeter

Also associated with the processing and marketing of agricultural products were such people as W Hardy, and J Cobbledick, grain buyers Cobbledick had an office where Johnson's motor repair shop is now Cobbledick bought grain from the farmers who gathered in the area directly across the road. One amusing incident about Cobbledick's office concerns the time that someone, probably Lancelot Hardy, put a cow in Cobbledick's office one night. When Cobbledick opened up in the morning he found an incredible shambles, he was furious and immediately blamed Hardy who, of course, denied doing it.

We mentioned A. Q. Bobier who dealt in eggs, butter, sugar beets and other produce. His large creamery began operating in 1896 and it is recorded that in 1898 he shipped thirty thousand pounds of butter worth ten thousand dollars to Dawson City. Bobier owned land, produced livestock and was generally one of the village's successful businessmen. He served on Council for a number of years. Bobier left Exeter before World War One and died in 1922 in Buffalo.

The horse trade was a major business in Exeter for decades. One of the most widely known horse dealers was William Bawden who also was an early Reeve of the village. Bawden migrated from Devonshire to Exeter in 1858. He and A. McDonnell imported horses from Scotland, Belgium and France for over thirty years. Bawden made thirty-eight trips to Europe to buy horses. William Bawden died appropriately enough in his buggy on October 13, 1913, his horse took him home. The Bawden-McDonnell barns were on John Street where the seed plant now stands. These premises saw "some of the finest horses ever to come to Canada". J. G. Dow later operated the barn. Bissett, Handford and others were also active in the horse trade which will be more fully treated in the chapter dealing with transportation.

In commenting on the agricultural basis of the village a word should be said about the farmers' markets. There were several locations in Exeter which served as a market. The first plan of Exeter, which we noted previously was prepared in 1855, left a block which on later maps was designated as the Market Square. This block is now Victoria Park. Information regarding its market function is sketchy, it did not apparently function very long for it is noted in early papers that it became a fenced pasture area for cattle and eventually became overgrown. In the 1890's Joseph Acheson and some others donated the area to the Village. Apparently Acheson was instrumental in having the area cleaned up and having trees planted. The park was once called Jubilee Park and then Victoria Park. There was also a farmers' market, for a time, near the Town Hall. It was opened every Saturday morning in the 1890's. A farmers' grain market was located on the corner of Main and Wellington where in 1877 wheat sold for one dollar and seventy-five cents to two dollars and sixty cents a bushel. The price of wheat sixty years later in Exeter was sixty cents per bushel and is now about

two dollars and twenty-five cents. We should also add that suppliers of farm machinery have been important Exeter businessmen from the days of Verity and W. J. Bissett's Deering Harvesting Company agency to the present.

One last example will summarize the important relationship between the village and the agricultural community. The following statistics are for the period, Monday, November 6, 1890 to Thursday of the same week. During these four days the following shipments were made from the Exeter Station on the London, Huron and Bruce Railway. The Exeter Milling Company shipped several loads of flour, A. Q. Bobier shipped several carloads of turnips to the United States, R. S. Laing "The apple king" shipped three hundred and twenty barrels of apples, H. Willert shipped two carloads of lambs, and a carload of horses, several carloads of poultry and eggs were also shipped. This was not unusual, these shipments illustrate how active the Exeter Station was in the shipment of agricultural products. It was noted, for example, in February, 1913 that during the preceding year four hundred and sixty tons of butter had been shipped from the three creameries, Exeter, Winchelsea and Centralia. It was also reported in the same month that 55 car loads or 1400 tons of sugarbeets had been shipped from the Exeter Station.

We have been concerned up to this point with the different kinds of manufacturing and processing activities that have been found in Exeter. There were a good many other business concerns and it is to these which were mostly found on the Main Street that we want to turn.

Exeter's business affairs were chronicled by the weekly newspaper. The doings of Main Street, the churches, the social events, the sports, the births and deaths, in short every aspect of life was covered in the pages of the weekly paper. The first paper to be established in the village was "The Times". This paper began in August, 1873. Within two years it had over nine hundred subscribers. The founder, publisher and editor was John White, a staunch Conservative, who pulled no punches when it came to letting the "Grits" have a blast of his hostility. White did, indeed follow his own motto which appeared on his paper's front page each week. "Hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may." White's first office and printing shop was located in a frame building on Main Street across from Molson's Bank which was then located in a building south of the store presently occupied by Dinney's Furniture Store. The paper moved to its present location in the 1880's. Thomas M. White who helped John on the Times later started the St. Marys Journal and in 1881 the Windsor Review.

Perhaps the most famous individual ever to be associated with the "Times" was Sir John Willison. Willison was born in Hills Green in 1856. Sometime in 1873 or 1874 Willison left home and eventually headed south along the London Road. Upon reaching Exeter he looked around for work and ended up in the employ of John White as a "Printer's devil" at a salary of twenty-five dollars per year. A few days after beginning his employment, Willison wrote an article describing his walk from Hills Green to Exeter. The idea was that the piece should appear in "The Times". White's son was favourably impressed and suggested to his father that the piece should be printed and that young Willison should do some more writing. John White said no, Willison was a "printer's devil" and no more. The young John Willison realizing that his talents were not appreciated in Exeter left clandestinely a few nights later, by climbing out his bedroom window above the shop. He moved on to London where he worked for the "London Advertizer". In the 1880's he went to the "Globe" in Toronto where he rose to become editor-in-chief and one of Canada's major political journalists. He became a close friend of Sir Wilfred Laurier. In 1913 he was awarded a knighthood. Willison in his "Reminiscences" recalls his two weeks with the "Times". It is not every Ontario weekly that can claim association with such ranking journalists as Willison. J. M. Southcott later was pleased to be able to write about Willison's brief apprenticeship with "The Times".

From 1873 to 1906 the "Times" was a White family enterprise with John White being the publisher and editor until his death in 1900. At that time Millar White became editor and publisher with the able assistance of his sister Matilda. Millar died in 1902 after suffering serious injuries in a fall on the ice while on his way to church. Matilda and J. J. White carried on the publication of the "Times".

In 1906 the Whites purchased the "Crediton News" and "The Dashwood Pioneer" from F. J. Wickwire. The Exeter Times Printing Company was formed as a stock company with J. J. White as President. The other officers were J. G. Stanbury, Vice-President, and Wickwire, Secretary. In 1909 White retired and J. G. Stanbury became President. Mel Southcott the diminutive "printer's devil" of only seven years previous purchased White's shares. Southcott purchased Wickwire's shares in 1911 and became editor and manager of the company at a salary of sixty-five dollars per month. By 1941 J. M. Southcott had acquired all of the capital shares of the Exeter Times-Advocate, the Advocate having amalgamated with the Times in 1924, just two years after the company had acquired the Hensall Observer from Wickwire.

On June 9, 1887 Thomas Passmore took over as the publisher of Exeter's second newspaper He published the first issue of the "Exeter Advocate" on that date in his offices at the corner of John and Main Streets Passmore was actually continuing a second paper in the village rather than starting a new venture since the "Exeter Reflector" had been published from 1877 to 1887 The "Reflector" was founded by Dr H M Cowan and later edited and published by George Moir, a former principal of the St Marys Public School The "Reflector" was Conservative and Anti-Temperance Moir gave up the newspaper in 1887 and the equipment was taken over by Passmore who named the paper the "Advocate"

The "Advocate" was to be diametrically opposite in its principles to the "Reflector" since, as Passmore wrote, "the paper will be conducted on Reform Principles and will give that Party hearty support" Passmore deserved credit for his courage in publishing a Liberal journal in opposition to the Conservative "Times" in Conservative Exeter Passmore also wrote that his paper would be "the worthy exponent and advocate of that Great Movement Prohibition" The Liberal Advocate lasted only six months In January 1888 Passmore sold out to William Sanders who wrote in the first issue to be published under his management that "we wish to be distinctly understood that this paper will be strictly conducted upon a purely Conservative basis" So Exeter again had two Conservative papers and this was to remain the situation until the Whites gave up the 'Times' to Southcott and Stanbury who were both Liberals and gave moderate support to that party, although the 'Times' did not become as vehemently Liberal as it had been Conservative Further discussion of the political nature of the newspapers may be found in the chapter on politics

The 'Advocate' was printed in the offices at the corner of John and Main Streets until 1890 when it moved to the location where Sanders grocery store is now found George Manson took over the former office and sold boots and shoes there The Advocate remained in the Sanders family until its amalgamation with the Times in 1924 In that year C H Sanders and his associate R N Creech gave up the newspaper Creech, incidentally lived to the ripe age of eighty-five, dying in 1960 He had taught school at Sharon, had been an associate with C H Sanders in the Advocate, was involved with the canning factory and made an important contribution to the life of Exeter as a member of the Board of Education for thirty-seven years, as chairman of the hospital board and a member of many other organizations Further comment on Mr Creech is found in other chapters His wife was Edith Sanders

Consequently, since 1924 Exeter had only one newspaper to chronicle its affairs The Exeter Times Advocate since 1941 has been entirely owned and operated by the Southcotts. Politically the paper is officially independent but from about 1909 to 1950 or so it did give moderate support to the Liberal party. For the past twenty odd years, however, the paper has tended to support the local Conservative candidates.

In 1962, J. M. Southcott completed sixty years in newspaper work and in 1963 was named "Weekly newspaper man of the year". J. M. Southcott died in 1969 leaving the management of The Exeter Times-Advocate to his son Robert Southcott. The paper is one of the province's best weeklies and the printing establishment is one of the most modern in Western Ontario.

In addition to the weekly paper which was, of course, the official source of news on "Main Street" there were the barber shops of the village. On a Saturday night the barber shops were especially active and were open until very late, perhaps ten or eleven o'clock as the villagers and the farmers gathered to talk and get trimmed up for Sunday. Those were the

> "days of the old hitching posts,
> dusty, gravelled Main Street,
> coal oil lamps on top of posts
> situated at the corners of the
> street that had to be cleaned
> and refilled each day by Town Constable
> James Creech. Then came the carbon
> electric lights in the centre of the streets.
> The carbons came together in a glass
> covering and the sparks from the carbon
> created a brilliant light. These lights
> came on at dusk and were out at midnight"

These were also the days when the stores opened everyday at seven or eight in the morning and closed at nine or ten in the evening and on Saturday at twelve midnight or later.

The saloons in the hotels, the stores, the barbershops were busy on a Saturday night. The streets were crowded with horse drawn vehicles and bicycles. Boys ran up and down the streets, people shopped and gossiped. Saturday night in an Ontario small town was the most exciting time of the week. Today Exeter is dormant on Saturday night. As was mentioned the barber shops were centres of village news. One of the early barbers in Exeter was E. Fish who opened his shop in 1875 and carried on his trade until 1906. The shop was located where Wuerth's store is presently located.

Castor Willis took over the Fish barber shop in 1906 having served his apprenticeship with Fish. Ed Willis took over after Castor. Another early shop was the "Central Barber Shop and Tonsorial Parlor". Charles Manning operated this shop until 1888 when he left Exeter for Dodge City in search of adventure. There is

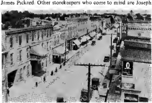
no record, however, of his ever shaving Marshall Dillon! Ike Dearing took over this shop which was one door north of the Central Hotel.

The shop in the basement of what is now Bell and Laughton's law office was operated first by A. Hastings. He called it the "Exeter Barber Shop" and advertised "shaving and hair cutting in the latest styles of the art". This shop was operated over the years by Frank Boyle, Elmore Harness, "Chub" McCurdy, but Hastings was probably the most colorful in that he enjoyed a close relationship with 'John Barleycorn', when under the influence, the quality of his conversation went up but evidently one could not say the same for the quality of his haircuts. It is likely that he gave some of his shaving customers a fright as he wielded the razor. The shop was the headquarters of Exeter's baseball and hockey experts when it was being operated by Frank "Derry" Boyle.

Haircut prices a few decades ago were twenty-five cents for adults, fifteen cents for children; shaves were fifteen cents. Many customers had their own shaving mugs on the shelf of the shop.

In many ways the typical Exeter businessman was the general merchant. Every Ontario small town had the general merchant. Frequently he became the town's most well-to-do businessman. Many of them had various business interests. In Exeter a number of names come to mind of men whose basic enterprise was the store but who had other businesses as well.

In Exeter the first two names obviously are Isaac Carling and James Pickard. Other storekeepers who come to mind are Joseph



Exeter's Main Street fifty years ago
Note the Central Hotel in the foreground

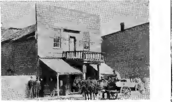
This scene of Exeter's Main Street looks south along the east side of the street

Acheson, Richard Pickard, George Samwell, R E Pickard, T B and W J Carling George Mace, Farmer Brothers, and Jones and May There are a number of others who will also be mentioned in the following pages which deal with the stores and businesses of Exeter's Main Street

As we have already noted the first three stores to be established in Exeter were Isaac Carling's general store, Joseph Acheson's shoe making establishment, and James Pickard's store which eventually became the largest store in the village James Pickard as we previously noted had come to this area about 1852, he first established a small store somewhere along the third concession of Usborne Township A short time later he moved to Exeter where he soon constructed his large store Pickard as we noted had a number of enterprises, he built a sawmill and a grist mill as well as the store He farmed land on the east side of Exeter and raised livestock including the production of the largest steer ever seen in the area "General Pickard" weighed three thousand eight hundred and forty pounds and was thirteen and one-half feet long Pickard sold the steer to buyers in Berlin (Kitchener)

His big store was Exeter s "Old Reliable House" and occupied all of the big building on Main Street south of James Street Incidentally, the name of the street is for James Pickard This store sold all types of goods and occupied the three floors of the building In 1889 the store had forty-six employees in hardware, tin shop, groceries, dry goods, millinery, tailor shop and other areas Some of these employees were Wes Creech, Will Folland, W H Moncur, D Tait, J Bissett, G Sheere, William Creech, Will Quance, to name only a few There were ten young ladies employed in the store including Miss Weekes, Miss Eacrett, Miss Vosper, and Miss Down Another Pickard employee was Frank Tom who left Exeter in 1887, he went to Ohio where he eventually was elected to the Senate as a Republican His brother J E Tom was a school inspector in Huron County for many years Pickard also employed other men as teamsters, one of these was Frank Gill

The building now occupied by the Exeter Furniture Company was James Pickard's warehouse The building may have been built in the late 1850's or early 1860's and since Pickard's time it has been used as a pork packing plant, a horse barn (Tom Handford), a garage (Kernick and Pilon), a turnip plant (S Winer), a truckers' garage (Bagshaw), a furniture plant (Jensen and McCaffrey) Sam Sanders owned the building for many years



Sid Davis' Feed Store

It was James Pickard together with Isaac Carling and one or two others who had the first village plan prepared in 1855 There are arguments over who gave Exeter its name It was suggested in the Times that Carling "although a Yorkshireman christened Exeter", the more likely possibility, however, is that James Pickard having come from Devon and knowing that the settlement was dominated by Devon men selected the name It was Pickard and Carling who also led the move for Exeter's incorporation as a village Pickard was one of Exeter's leading citizens for over fifty years and people talked about his widespread business activities, referring to him as "Storekeeper Pickard" or "Farmer Pickard" or "Miller Pickard" or "Boss Pickard" depending on the circumstances. In addition to the store, the sawmill, the grist mill and the farmland, Pickard also had two large stables on the land about where the high school is now. He owned most of the land on the east side of Main Street at one time or another, he bought grain also. He owned several houses including a large one where Snell Brothers is now located. This large house was the place where many of Pickard's employees from the store boarded. Mrs. Pickard fed them, no small feat since their numbers were large.

Pickard opened stores in the late 1880's in Seaforth, Blenheim and St. Marys. So as we note Pickard was involved in virtually every type of enterprise that characterized rural Western Ontario during the last half of the 1800's. He must be classed as one of this area's leading businessmen.

It was surprising and shocking, then, to the people of Exeter to read in the Times of November 7, 1889 the following item:

> "It is with regret we announce
> the financial failure of Mr. James
> Pickard, the oldest merchant in
> Exeter. Mr. Pickard had been in
> straightened circumstances for
> years . . . On Wednesday last the final
> role was enacted by his assigning in
> trust to Mr. George Samwell for the
> benefit of his creditors whose claims
> aggregate a sum over one hundred
> thousand dollars . . . "

Pickard had over-extended himself, particularly in the purchasing of large stocks for the store. The opening of the stores in the other towns was done in an effort to move some of the large stock of merchandise. His properties were sold. A. J. McTavish took over the store and J. N. Howard bought the grist mill, house, dam and surrounding property.

"Boss" Pickard lived out his remaining years in the house on the southwest corner of James and Andrew Streets. He died in 1904 at the age of eighty-three. It has been suggested that Pickard built the large house on James Street for his son-in-law Nelson Hooper. It is thought that lawyer R. H. Collins acquired the home when Pickard went into bankruptcy. After Collins died in 1900 the house became the property of SamuelSanders who had previously lived in the Southcott house on the corner of James and Andrew Streets. Mr. Ralph Sweitzer acquired the house about 1960 and renovated it, it is now a nursing home.

James Pickard was a Conservative in politics, and a Methodist in religion. He married twice, first to Elizabeth Welsh and secondly to Mrs. George Harwood. There are no members of James Pickard's family now living in Exeter. For an unlettered, rural

Devonshire boy (it was reported that Pickard could barely read and write) he did very well in the world

Richard Pickard and George Samwell opened a large store in 1872 on the corner where F. A. May and Sons store is now located. Both of these men had come to Exeter from Devonshire George Samwell was born in Plymouth in 1832 and had migrated to New York in 1854. He subsequently moved to Exeter to work for James Pickard Samwell was a Liberal and a Presbyterian His large house (presently owned by A Johnson) and grounds on John Street occupied most of the block Samwell was married twice — first to a Miss Trick and in later years to Mrs Ann McLeod who outlived George who died in 1906 Ann died in 1918 at the age of ninety-one William Kernick bought the Samwell house after Ann died

Richard Pickard, a brother of James was born in 1829 in Ringsast Parish, Devonshire, he migrated to Canada in 1849 He entered the employ of James Pickard upon arriving in Exeter. Richard married Phoebe Elston in 1864 The Elstons had migrated to Exeter from Morchard Bishop, Devonshire in 1855 Miss Elston later commented that Exeter had only fourteen houses in 1855 Richard and Phoebe had six children, Robert E., Richard Jr., Dr Edward, Herbert G., Jean and Mrs W. J. Verity Robert E. Pickard who was born in 1867 was the father of C. V. Pickard and Allen Pickard two well known Exeter citizens Richard Pickard was a Liberal and a Methodist, the Times described him as "a friend to the poor and needy"

These two men, then, opened a large store in 1872 The store eventually found it necessary to employ as many as forty clerks to handle their large trade "The firm by honourable dealing and good value gained the confidence of the people" The store handled a large stock of dry goods which were under Mr R. Seldon's charge In addition the other usual general merchandise items were carried including fancy millinery A new millinery showroom was opened in 1884 under Miss McIntyre's supervision Some of the attractions in millinery in 1884 included "shell pink otto silk orleans bonnets", "Tuscan Silk - La Geocanda", "Princess bonnet in Eugenia la blue satin" Styles displayed at the opening were Toronville, Belle Cole, Fatigue and Tulette sunshades, West Point, Marcella, Dudette but "the soubrette and Belloidere were the centre of the admiring throng" Miss McIntyre the "manageress of the Millinery Department" also had French silks, kid gloves and many other items

In the winter of 1889, the partnership was dissolved with Samwell withdrawing but as the Times noted "the business will be carried on in all of its usual magnitude" by Richard Pickard The store had between thirty and forty employees at the time and they made a presentation to Mr. Samwell. At the "Great Dissolution Sale" there were many bargains such as Ladies' English Walking Jackets at three dollars and twenty-five cents, Ladies' Gloves from five cents, Corsets were twenty cents and up, Men's overcoats were four dollars, twelve pounds of tea sold for one dollar. The business known as R. Pickard and Son carried on until 1898 when Richard died. His son, Robert E., carried on the Robert Pickard Company, Robert had worked for the store since the 1880's. The business was moved from the corner store which was taken over by E. J. Spackman who also took over the store to the south from Hugh Spackman. Spackman operated one store as a dry goods store and the other as a grocery. It was Spackman who put in the archway connecting the two stores and in 1899 he had the sign, which is still visible, painted on the north wall of the store.

Robert Pickard built the store which now houses the Chainway store and carried on business there, he also had stores in Hensall and Dashwood for a short time. Some Pickard prices in 1901 are listed below.

clothes pegs one cent per dozen
baking soda 5 cents for two pounds
tea was twenty cents a pound
Men's tweed suits were thirteen dollars
blankets were ninety-five cents
cotton was five cents per yard
figs were twenty-five cents for six pounds

In 1903 R. E. Pickard sold the business to Bennett and Snell. It soon after became Snell and Rowe. The Times hoped "for the fruition of their most sanguine expectations". Robert Pickard then migrated west to Frobisher, Saskatchewan with his wife, the former Elizabeth Verity and family. He remained there until 1925. Robert died in the family house on John Street in 1934 and a scant four days later his wife died. The name Pickard then was important on Main Street from James' arrival in 1852 for the next fifty years. C. V. Pickard continued to keep the Pickard name on Main Street from the 1930's to the early 1960's.

Another native of Morchard Bishop, Devon was William Drew who reached London, Ontario in 1849. There, cholera claimed the lives of his father, mother, and two sisters. William and four other members of the family walked up the London Road to Exeter in 1854. Drew, a carpenter, built many of the early frame houses in the village, he also built the Commercial Hotel about 1860 and operated it for twelve years after which he sold the hotel to John Hawkshaw. Drew's brother, Eldred, operated a cabinet-making shop, Eldred left Exeter for California. Drew also developed a furniture and undertaking business which was later sold by John Drew to R N Rowe who operated the business for many years before it was taken over by R Dinney. It is reported that Drew suggested the name "The Times" to John White when he opened the newspaper office in 1873 Drew was twice married first to Miss Bawden and then to Mary Holman Drew died at the age of eighty-six in 1914

"The Carling store was one of the real pioneer cracker barrel stores with a large wood stove around which the problems of the day were thoroughly discussed." It was noted also that "The Carling store was the centre of the Tory party" in Exeter The original Carling store was a frame structure built in 1847 by Isaac Carling Isaac later built a brick block, where Beavers Hardware was located, to house his general store and it was this store being described in the quotation above The original store building was left standing as a warehouse until the Dickson and Carling building, which is now the Bell and Laughton building was erected

Isaac Carling sold dry goods, groceries, wines, liquors, and other general merchandise One of the Carlings' advertisements in 1878 revealed Carling's political interests. The advertisement noted that

> "The National Policy having
> triumphed at the polls
> Isaac Carling is prepared to give
> his customers the benefits
> that will accrue from its adoption."

The business was sold in 1912 by W J Carling, the last Carling to own the store, after sixty-five years of operation under the Carling name The new owner was B Bedford of Brighton W J Carling and his family moved to Brighton In later years the store became a Chinese Cafe and later Beavers Hardware

Another Main Street building which has been a landmark on the street for one hundred years is the building presently occupied by Gould and Jory The building was built in the 1860's by C Eacrett whose harness shop occupied the south part of the building In the north part of the building was Ranton Brothers general store A century or more ago there were three frame stores immediately north of Rantons, where the Public Utilities building now stands these stores were John McInnis' flour and feed store which was later George Hyndman's store, Dan Dyer's printing and novelty shop, and Miss Crocker's millinery South of Ranton was, of course, Eacrett's then B S O'Neil's Bank where the law office is now, above the bank was the dental office of Dr Kinsman South of O'Neil's bank was a hardware, Dr Browning's Dominion Medical Laboratory and J P Clarke

In the late 1880's or 1890's Rantons was taken over by J A Stewart He called the store 'The Big Bankrupt Store' and he specialized in buying up the stock of bankrupt businesses One of his advertisements said that a lady had been found wandering around blind on Main Street, her blindness having been induced by the very low prices of white wool blankets at the Big Bankrupt Store the prices had "knocked her silly". Stewart expanded the store into the south section, he sold groceries, dry goods, boots, shoes and other goods In the 1890's he had boys' oxfords for eighty-seven cents, ladies' lace boots for one dollar and seventeen cents, and one dollar and twenty-seven cents Stewart lived a block from the store on the south east corner of John and Andrew Street He died in 1950 at the age of ninety Two of the Stewarts' clerks in the early years of this century were T O and H O Southcott In those years Southcott's wages were one dollar and fifty cents a week After working at other jobs the Southcott brothers purchased in 1919 the dry goods business of B W F Beavers which was then situated in the store now occupied by Lindenfields In 1926 the Southcotts purchased J A Stewart's store and operated the business until the early 1950's when it was acquired by Messrs Gould and Jory

Southcotts have been represented on the Main Street of Exeter since the late 1850's when John Southcott opened a grocery store Charles Southcott had a tailor shop, both John and Charles also had various other types of businesses in the 1860's and 1870's William Southcott built the block at the corner of John and Main Street but later he had financial troubles and other difficulties William's wife, Christy Ann, a daughter of Thomas Oke, operated a dress making establishment with eighteen employees Christy Ann was the mother of H O and T O mentioned above and the mother of J M Southcott who as we have noted owned the newspaper The paper as we also noted is still operated by the Southcotts Charles Southcott, and his son George were the first Southcotts to become involved with the Grand Bend property known as Southcott Pines So for nearly one hundred and twenty-five years Southcotts have been associated with the business activities of Exeter

The name 'Jones and May' was associated with Exeter's Main Street for many decades It was noted in previous pages how J G Jones began to do business in Exeter In 1908 William May joined Jones and a few years later Fred A May joined the firm Jones' wife was Lavina May and the two Mays were her nephew When Hubert Jones took over in 1927 he and the Mays continued the extensive dry goods and grocery business Jones and May were one of the first stores in Exeter to install a telephone, the number was thirty-two until dials were installed The dry goods business is carried on by W May and the grocery business by H Holtzmann

C B Snell was one of Exeter's leading entrepreneurs from the 1890's to 1929 when he died Snell was Reeve at the time of his death, he was seventy-seven years old Charles B Snell and his brother George operated a butcher business in the 1890's, they expanded the meat business and established a Pork Packing Plant in the old Pickard building on James Street He was associated with Tremaine and Zueffle in establishing the steam generating plant which produced electricity for Exeter for about twenty years

Snell built many houses in Exeter, including the old Creech house on the corner of John and Andrew Streets where he lived himself for some years He erected other houses on Andrew Street in the vicinity of Exeter South's first school Snell demolished this school building and erected on the school site the house occupied for some years by Luther Penhale Snell also erected the two houses immediately north of the Penhale house Snell tore down the old Digory Braund house in Francistown and built several houses from the material including one or two on John Street

C B Snell built the garage now known as Snell Bros Ltd In order to build this garage it was necessary to construct part of it over an open creek which ran through Exeter at that time Snell persuaded Council in the 1920's to enclose the open creek in a large tile along the north side of Anne Street After this had been done Snell built the four red brick houses along the street Snell purchased the old Commercial Hotel about 1916 and converted it to stores and apartments

Snell attempted to provide Exeter with a hospital when he purchased the old James Pickard house on Main Street, the house was just south of the garage he had built He then converted the house to a hospital, the project was not, however, successful

As might be expected Snell owned one of the first cars in Exeter He was an avid lawn bowler and again as perhaps might be expected in those days he was "a leading member of the James Street Methodist Church"

For many years one of Exeter's leading Main Street figures was B W F Beavers Before noting Beavers' business activities it is worth mentioning one or two facts about his family background The Beavers emigrated from Yorkshire, to be specific from Hull, Yorkshire in 1846 They sailed on the immigrant ship "Stentor" and the voyage to Quebec took three months The family, William Beavers and his wife Sarah (Clarkson) and their children first went to Toronto and then made the rough journey to Blanshard Township and took up Lot sixteen, Concession four William could not stand the rigors of pioneer life and died in 1849 at the age of forty-nine leaving his wife Sarah who was forty-two years old and their nine children named Mary, Joseph, Benjamin, William, John, Hariot, Hannah, George and Samuel Sarah proved to be tougher stuff than her husband because after burying him in the cemetery where the first log Methodist Church was built on the Mitchell road she proceeded to raise her family; she lived to be ninety years old passing away in 1897

William Jr the third son of the pioneer couple married Louisa Senn Louisa's family history contains the following anecdote Mrs Senn's father's mother, that is, Louisa's great grandmother was stolen by Indians when she was five years old and living with her family in Pennsylvania in the early 1700's The girl was carried away by the Indians who also took her younger brother and an aunt The Indians killed the aunt and the boy but the little girl was spared and became a favorite of the chief She was finally ransomed at the age of twelve by a German with whom she stayed until she was twenty at which time she married Joseph Senn, a Swiss silk weaver

William and Louisa stayed in Blanshard and raised a family including Benjamin W F Beavers who eventually settled in Exeter marrying Michael Eacrett's daughter Beavers operated stores in various locations and engaged in various types of retail trade ending his business life in 1946 when his son Reg took over the hardware store B W F Beavers was a leader among businessmen's groups such as the Chamber of Commerce but he is probably best remembered for his contribution to the municipal affairs of the community The chapter on municipal affairs deals further with B W F Beavers

It is, of course, not possible to deal extensively with every business on Main Street but it is worth mentioning some of the others Farmer Bros was a well known name on Exeter's Main Street for a number of years The Star Grocery was started by Thomas Farmer in the 1870's on the corner of Huron and Main Streets and later moved to the site now occupied by the shoe store north of the Town Clerk's office The business was taken over by John and Richard Farmer and expanded to include liquor and wines Eventually the liquor and grocery business was separated in two stores with the grocery store being where the shoe store is now located and the liquor store in a building immediately to the south This building which housed the liquor store had been Exeter's first Bible Christian Church Many stories are told of the tricks played on old John Farmer in this liquor store In 1908 J G Jones purchased Farmer's grocery store and installed a seed mill in the building About the same time Alfred Walters purchased the liquor store which he converted to a shoemaking establishment Walters had come to the Devon settlement south of Exeter from Devonshire He operated the hotel at Devon for a time before coming to Exeter as a shoemaker Alf Walters' shoestore was a favorite haunt of the top checker players of the village Apparently the occasional drop was also available in the shop

J G Jones bought the old building, however, in 1915 and moved it to the rear of his store where it became a poultry barn and later a warehouse. At least part of the building still stands behind the A and H Grocery store and is still used as a storage building First a church, then a grocery store, and a liquor store, a shoe store, a chicken barn and now a warehouse, the old building has served the town in many ways providing "spiritual" solace in several ways

Other stores sold liquor and wines in Exeter in addition to Farmer Bros We mentioned that Isaac Carling's store sold liquor G A Mace sold groceries and liquors for over twenty years until 1887 when the business was purchased by J. W. Broderick F J Knight sold groceries and liquors in the 1890's and early 1900's, Knight's store was on the corner where Darlings store is now located Samuel Hersey sold groceries and liquors and it is worth noting that his daughter Mabel became superintendent of nurses at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal She was awarded an Order of the British Empire

There have been many, many other stores selling groceries, meats and general merchandise in addition to the large stores which we have mentioned The following come to mind G A Hyndman, Groceries and Ice Cream Parlor - "The coolest and best appointed in town", Wood and Fuke, Butchers, J P Clarke, General Merchant, Trick and Currelly in Francistown, Groceries, the Currelly of this business was the father of Charles Currelly who was born in 1876 and who became a world renowned archeologist and first curator of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto Currelly, in his autobiography comments on the economic life of Exeter in the 1880's as follows

> "Exeter at that time was a village of about two thousand a mile and a quarter long with two or three streets on each side of its Main Street ... The village was extremely pretty, owing to its tidiness and the flowers and vegetables growing everywhere ... Economically, the town was free from misery The only real tragedy was typhoid fever, I can remember a hundred and twenty-five cases in a single autumn
>
> As I left at an early age I was afraid that I might have idealized this life, but I consulted a man who had left at a mature age and he assured me that I had not done so If a man were out of work for a few days in the summer time, he was rather glad as it gave him a chance to do more in his garden In the winter he could get more wood cut up A number of families kept a cow which ran the roads, and milk products were plentiful The comfort of the population was largely due to the great economy there was no waste, and food was ridiculously cheap by modern standards The best beef was ten cents a pound the poorest about four cents Chickens were five cents a pound ducks six cents, and turkeys seven cents Bread was five cents

> for a large loaf, and milk was five cents a quart. Most of the vegetables were home grown. The farmers stripped the hides from their beasts, our tanner tanned them, and excellent shoemakers made the leather into long boots, which came nearly to the knees, for the farmers. The boots had brilliant red or green pieces of leather set in the front. Ordinary boots and occasionally what were called low shoes were made for the villagers. The farmers' wool was woven into blankets and the woollen mill was capable of weaving quite complicated designs. We manufactured our own wooden pumps, wagons, sleighs and buggies, and nearly all of our furniture. We had one fair sized factory, the Verity Plow Company. The main imports were groceries and cloth. Wages were steady at a dollar a day. Apprentices started at three dollars a week or, if they boarded in, as they usually did, it was fifty dollars for the first year, seventy-five for the second, and a hundred for the third. After that they became journeymen. For some reason a large number of the village boys became tailors. Most of the work was done on a friendly basis by people who had gone to school together, grown up together, and called one another by their Christian names.
>
> During this period of my life I spent much of my free time watching men at work, until I knew a good deal about the different trades that were practised in the village: blacksmithing, woodworking, stone cutting and stone polishing. Later I had to work with archaeologists who knew nothing about these basic kinds of work, and then found what a great advantage I had in the study of early craftmanship, as the village trades were much the same trades that one met in examining ancient communities."

We have been noting the food stores. We can also add to the list Stanley and Jermyn, J. Crunnican "The People's Grocery Store", Henry Bierling's store in Exeter North, J. T. Manning, meats occupied the original Carling store for a time, Louis Day's Butcher Shop operated until 1900. After that Louis operated a dairy herd, produced vegetables from his market gardens and otherwise helped supply Exeter's food requirements. Louis had come from Amberly in Gloucestershire to London and thence to Exeter in the 1890's to manage Snell's Packing Plant. Louis Sr. died in 1947 at the age of eighty-eight. His son Louis has been a well-known figure in Exeter for years, being best remembered perhaps by the many children whom he befriended and gave rides to on his wagon. Louis Day Jr. was one of the last to keep horses to work land within the town limits and was the last to keep milk cows within the town limits. His barn until recently, stood behind the post office as a reminder of the days when many of Exeter's stores and houses had barns at the rear of the property. These barns provided housing for the cows, horses, pigs and poultry which were kept by a majority of the towns people in the past.

Hooper and Bissett's Grocery was one door south of Samwell and Pickards, R. E. Spicer's Grocery was in the Southcott block

We mentioned the Farmers' Cash Market on the Town Hall grounds There was Rollies Grocery in the 1930's, Frank Coates, Aljoe Sanders, Irwin Ford, H C Rivers, are other names to add to the list of food merchants

Every type of store could be found on the Main Street of Exeter Common to most small Ontario towns like Exeter was the undertaking trade, usually associated with the furniture business One of the early undertaking firms was that of Charles and Samuel Gidley whose furniture business and undertaking rooms were located in the Oddfellows Block We have mentioned the details of the Gidley family in an early section Samuel Gidley lived in the Gidley house on William Street until 1904 when he sold it to Valentine Mitchell and moved to Duluth, Minnesota Charles remained in Exeter

John Drew, "undertaker", could be found next door to Molsons Bank in the store now occupied by Dinneys He also had other locations Drew's advertisements advised the people of Exeter and area that he had

> "Coffins of all sizes kept on
> hand and made to order,
> shrouds and burial robes made
> of the best material Funerals
> attended to with promptness

The best hearse in the County furnished for five dollars"

John Drew further advised that he used the "techniques of the Egyptian embalmer" to prevent the "discoloring of corpses and offensive odours" Drew sold his business in 1887 after, perhaps, thirty years in the trade to Robert N Rowe and Walter Andrew

R N Rowe was the son of Thomas Rowe who had come from St Kew, Cornwall, to Stephen Township in 1853 Thomas had twelve children One of them, Robert N was one of Exeter's well known Main Street figures for over fifty years When he and Andrew took over Drew's business in 1887 he began an undertaking career that lasted for fifty years, it is said that he buried over two thousand people He saw the disappearance of the horse-drawn, high black hearse with the black plumes and black nets covering the horses and the appearance of the motor vehicle to replace the horses He also saw the end of the $25 funeral Rowe died in 1952 The business is now operated by R Dinney

Other undertakers included John Brawn whose furniture and undertaking rooms were "opposite Kemp's Tobacco Store" on the corner of Main and Gidley, James Beverly's "Furniture Emporium" was in the Oddfellow's Block in the early 1900's, W C Huston was advertised as "the practical embalmer" There were the firms of Popplestone and Gardiner, Hopper and Hockey as well

Hardware stores included Hugh Spackman's, W. J. Bissett, who represented the Deering Harvesting Company, T. Hawkins and Son (now operated by G. Fisher), O'Bryne and Company, W. H. Moncur and J. N. Howard. W. J. Heaman opened a hardware store in the early 1900's in the store now known as Gunns. Heaman served on Exeter's Council for ten years during which time he was Reeve for two years. He was Lieutenant in F. Company, 33rd Huron Militia regiment and eventually became Lieutenant-Colonel of the Huron Battalion (Militia). During the first World War he served first as a Captain and then as a Major in Huron's one hundred and sixty-first. Heaman was a liberal in politics. The Heaman home was on John Street, where K. Johns lives now. Heaman sold out to Lindenfield and Traquair and moved to London; he served several terms as mayor of that city. A small note of interest mentioned by J. M. Southcott was that Fred Heaman the "Colonel's son", owned the first radio in Exeter and J. M. Southcott mentioned hearing a piano recital from Detroit in 1922 over Heaman's radio.

Hardware stores sold all types of hardware, did tinsmithing, sold coal oil and fuels. An item in the Times of March eighth, 1877 mentions that "coal oil has come down considerably this last week on account of the ring formed for the purpose of keeping the price up, being broken" (the price had come down from fifty cents to twenty-five cents for an amount not mentioned in the item).

In addition to the liquor stores which supplied spiritous drink Exeter had several drug stores to help supply the wants of the villagers. The drug stores sold liquor from time to time under license and only to people with prescriptions from a doctor. A good many of the patent medicines sold also consisted of healthy portions of alcohol or drugs such as laudanum (a mixture of alcohol and opium). The druggists dispensed medicines such as Merchants Gargling Oil (a liniment for man and beast), Ayer's Sarsparilla, Baxter's Mandrake Bitters, St. Leon's Mineral Water, an Elixer Vita for Dispepsia and Piles, Freemans Worm Powders, Paines Celery Compound and countless other cures for Nervous Prostration, Female Weakness, Paralysis, Hot Flashes, St. Vitus Dance, Broken Constitution, Dyspepsia, Constipation, Frightful dreams, Scrofula, Consumption, Tenderness in the Stomach, Boils, Carbuncles, summer complaint, pains anywhere and an endless list of other ailments.

Also available were cures for male problems such as "seminal weakness", or spermatorrhea induced by self abuse, involuntary emissions, impotency, impediments of Marriage, etc." Various cures for these problems were advertised by a Dr. Culverwell, by "a missionary just returned from South America", by Drs. Kennedy and

Kergan of Detroit Testimonials appeared from men who "suffered untold agonies", because of "sinful habits in youth", they testified to cures for syphilis, emissions, varicoole, and impotency

Burdock Blood Bitters "cured scrofulous constitutions and Hereditary Taints in the System" Halloway's Pills fixed "Debilitated Constitutions" "Keep your stomach clean and your bowels regular" Dr Carsons Bitters will do it. Advertisements for various medicines are reproduced on the following pages.

The drug stores dispensing these and other medicines in Exeter included the Dominion Medical Laboratory owned by Dr Browning who "dispenseth knowledge in no limited degree" Brownings Drug Store was open until very recently and was the oldest business establishment in Exeter More will be said about Dr Browning below. Grieves Drug Store (next to Seniors), Van Dusens Drugs, and H Noseworthy who sold drugs and sewing machines one door west of the Commercial Hotel were others Dr. Lutz, sold to W. S. Cole in 1906 after decades of practice in Exeter, then moved to Gananoque where he died in 1913 In 1904 William Howey bought D Hartlieb's repair shop and set up his son in the drug business W Howey sold out in 1935 to a Mr Walker who sold to Robertson in 1940 who in turn sold to W Huntley who presently owns the store

Exeter has had various bakers and confectioners including A. Skinner, J Logg who in 1874 advertised his "Ice Cream Saloon" with ice cream and temperance drinks, Joseph Lindsay, George Northmore who operated the Exeter Bakery, Bells Bakery, E A Follick's Ice Cream Parlour, Bagshaw, W. E. Middleton, Wm Statham, J. T. O'Brien, and R Luxton. The last five men operated the bakeshop and restaurant now operated as Spicers This shop has been there since before the turn of the century and the barns behind this shop burned down in one of Exeter's most spectacular fires

A listing of other stores is provided below but it is no way intended to be complete. The names are mentioned only to illustrate the variety of stores found There were stores selling boots, shoes and harnesses of which Eacrett's and Walker's has been mentioned Others included William Fanson who built "Fanson's Block" in the 1860's just north of the Central Hotel Fanson later moved to Winnipeg This business block was later owned by A. J. McDonnell, and Judge Dickson Other harness shops will be dealt with in the chapter on horses

W. Johns was a tailor whose weekly advertisement said, "Get your pants down" at W. Johns McClelland Brothers in Drew's Block sold clothing J. G. Smallacombe was a tailor; John Back, flour and feed operated the Exeter Seed Store north of Carling's in the 1870's he advertised "Imports direct from the fountainhead —

England" A E Moore, Will Folland, W Trott leather, M M Rosebrugh, books, vases, "fancy boxes", S E Jones, clocks and watches, G Sanders, tobacco books etc , Miss Garlick, millinery, Kemp's tobacco store featuring Tin Tac Sweet Chewing Tobacco George Kemp was also the agent for steamship tickets, C Southcott and Sons clothiers and tailors, Sinclair Tait, toys and fancy goods, J Swallow, pumps in the Southcott block, A Lake, insurance and land agent in Fanson's Block, R H Sweet, boots and shoes These names were found along Exeter's Main Street Others can be added William Grigg came to Exeter from Plymouth in Devon in 1855 In the early 1860's he opened a book and stationery store where MacMillan's is now He had been a tailor but decided to try a new field He died in 1908 and his son John carried on the business for years Grigg's was the chief source of school supplies and every September the store was packed with eager youngsters buying their school books, pencils and paper B Swenerton handled seed grain, quick lime, salt and coal near the station Perkins and Martin had a music store, C Eacrett carried boots, shoes and bicycles R Hicks was a watchmaker and marriage licence issuer, John Treble sold boots and shoes (Later R Sweet's), Grieves Tailor Shop was one door north of Dr Lutz and was sold to W W Taman in 1903 and to McKnight and Walper years later, and is now George Vriese's store Incidentally some men's wear prices in 1902 were coats for seven dollars and seventy-five cents, pants for one dollar and fifty cents, boy's suits sold for two dollars and handkerchiefs were eight for twenty-five cents T Fitton was Exeter's first optician and jeweller, he had come to Exeter in 1867, built a number of houses on Main Street south of the river and opened his store in the Fanson Block his son Saxon, who was the first child born in the incorporated village of Exeter took over the business from his father who died in 1925 at the age of eighty-eight When Saxon died in 1937 the business became Taylor's Jewellery store and is now Campbells

The Opera House Block housed various businesses including furniture and undertaking businesses The Opera House is more fully treated in a later chapter In the 1930's it contained a Massey Harris agency and later an automobile supply store Willis Powell who died in 1957 at the age of seventy-nine, operated Powell's Bazaar, a variety store, he also owned the Purity Manufacturing Company whose chief product was Nameless Cold Remedy Levitt's Fair, a variety store was operated by W Levitt for some years Levitt also bought the Grand Bend Park, a fifty acre area, from John Spackman in 1901 Levitt sold the variety store in 1902 to a Mr Talbot who changed the name to Talbot's Bazaar

In more recent years store names such as Severn's shoe repair,

The Exeter radio shop, Snell and Boyle, The Institute of Musical Progress (Mrs. H. Gambrill), John C. Vidt, lockers, Ralph Bailey, florist (on the former William Snell property), Lawson and Trick, jewellers, come to mind. One also recalls Sam Lee's Chinese Laundry where Rowe's Electric is now located. Sam did shirts for ten cents, handkerchiefs for two cents. There was Wong's Cafe where Beavers Hardware Store is now. Another member of Exeter's Chinese business community was Pong Kwong's Laundry and Quick Lunch opposite the Dome Theatre and rink in the 1920's. Apparently these Chinese had a tough time in Exeter facing the jokes and teasing of the younger and not so young population. Ben Makins Steam Laundry and Steam Bath was north of the bowling green and later just south of the green; the steam baths were frequented by the hockey players after games. C. T. Brooks operated the express office where N. Hockey's Barber Shop was later located and where Norm Martin's Optometrist office is now, a man named Gillespie drew the freight from the office.

The photographic record of Exeter and its families was made largely by the Senior family although in the 1880's W. T. Johns advertised his 'Sunbeam Art Gallery' in Exeter North. It was, however, the Seniors who did most of the photography in the area. Charles Senior started in July 1867 with tin type photographs, his first photo studio was in the old Carling store where the Bell and Laughton building is now. Senior then purchased the old Royal Hotel building. His son Joseph Senior took over the business and in 1906 he acquired the building which now houses the poolroom and Rether's Restaurant. Joseph Senior practiced his photographic trade until 1943. Senior taught Czar Rollins, a son of Dr. Rollins, photography and Rollins became a photographer for the Cleveland News. Joseph Senior was village clerk for several decades as well. In 1939 he sold the north part of his building to Nelson Statton who opened a poolroom there. Statton had previously, in 1937, opened a poolroom across the street. This poolroom was the first in Exeter and created a terrible stir; the good villagers were sure that the fires of hell would rage and burn in Exeter now that there was a poolroom. This contentious issue will be commented upon elsewhere. In 1943 Jim Grieve purchased the south part of the Senior building and opened the restaurant which is now Rether's. Joseph Senior died in 1955 at the age of ninety. A few of his old pictures still survive although the old metal plates were melted for scrap during World War One and many of his glass negatives were used for windows in Bailey's greenhouse.

Exeter's financial affairs have been handled over the years by a number of banks. The first bank to open in Exeter, was probably the 'Exchange Bank of Canada' which was established in Exeter in the early 1870's. W. A. Hastings was the first manager. The Exchange Bank failed in 1882. In 1874 when Exeter had eight hundred and fifty-four people Molson's Bank opened a branch in the village. The branch was located in Drew's building at the corner of Main and Huron. The first manager was Edward Strathy who remained until 1877, he was succeeded by H. E. Brewer who served until 1883 and was followed by A. A. C. Denovan. The next manager was R. H. Archer and shortly after him in 1885 came clearly the most colorful man ever to manage a bank in Exeter and one of the most colorful characters ever to live in Exeter, this fellow was Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon who was born in Bideford, Devonshire and who entered the banking field with the National Bank of England, in Barnstaple, North Devon in 1862. He served six years in London and then emigrated to Montreal where he entered Molson's Bank. He was posted to Exeter as manager in 1885. During his tenure as manager the bank moved to a new building in 1901. This building is now the P. U. C. office. In order to erect it there the bank purchased the property owned by a Mr. Smale for three thousand dollars, the three frame stores, previously mentioned, were demolished. The new building cost ten thousand dollars to build but was centrally located and served the Bank until 1943. N. Dyer-Hurdon continued as manager until December 31, 1914, when he retired after fifty-two years in banking. Unfortunately he did not live long thereafter, passing away on August twenty-fifth, nineteen nineteen. Dyer-Hurdon was a prominent leader in the affairs of Exeter's societies, lodges, churches, athletics, and patriotic celebrations for thirty-four years. More will be said about him in other chapters.

N. Dyer-Hurdon was followed by W. D. Clarke who managed the bank until 1919. T. S. Woods took over in 1919 and was manager when Molsons amalgamated with the Bank of Montreal on the twenty-ninth of October, 1929. Molsons was the last of Canada's family banks having been founded in 1853. Woods remained as the manager of what is now the Bank of Montreal in Exeter until 1935 when he was succeeded by W. H. Moise who served until 1940. W. J. Floyd, J. F. Hendry, C. E. Shaw and C. Smith were the last four managers.

Exeter had only one private bank in its history, that was B. S. O'Neill's bank which was established in 1877 in offices now occupied by the Raymond law office. This bank operated until about 1903 or 1904 when it was bought by the Sovereign Bank. Mr. O'Neill lived in the large house on the south west corner of James and Albert Street occupied in recent years by the Farrows.

In July, 1902 the Sovereign Bank opened a branch in Exeter in the building now occupied by Russells. The manager was Mr. F. E. Karn. In 1903 the Sovereign Bank bought the McArthur and Com-

pany bank in Hensall and the Snell and Company banks in Dashwood and Zurich. The Sovereign Bank was taken over in 1908 by the Bank of Commerce.

The Commerce Bank operated in the same office as the Sovereign Bank for three or four years until a new bank building was erected on property purchased from John Treble. Mr. Treble had operated a business which produced and sold boots, shoes and harness. He had been on the site for many years. Treble was born in 1837 and died in 1901, and was one of Exeter's early businessmen. The new bank was opened in 1912. This is the building where the Bank of Montreal is now located because in 1943 the Bank of Commerce left Exeter and the Bank of Montreal took over the building. For about ten years Exeter had only one bank. This was the first time since the 1880's that Exeter had only one bank. The Bank of Nova Scotia opened a branch in the early 1950's.

The Post Office was an important institution on the Main Streets of Ontario's small towns. Exeter became a post village in 1855 with the first postmaster being William Sanders. We mentioned that a number of Sanders families came to Exeter, they all came from Devonshire and probably were somehow related. Francistown was designated a post village about the same time. John McDonnell was the first postmaster in Francistown. The Francistown post office was probably in McDonnell's Tavern. The first Exeter post office was in Sanders' house which stood on Main Street just north of the present location of Sanders' grocery store which was in a building erected by William Sanders in the 1860's. Sanders moved the post office to this building in the 1860's.

By the early 1850's, the people of the area were becoming impatient with the poor postal service. As we noted the post office was not established until 1855 and in 1852 people such as McLeod complained that "One great grievance subsists in the two petty post offices of this tract on London Road, viz.; though a person do deliver a letter to the courier say, here, he, the postman, delivers the same in the next post office where it must remain until his next trip".

One of the two post offices mentioned by McLeod was the Hay post office located about two miles north of Exeter. "It was opened October 6, 1842 with Joseph Hardy as the first postmaster. It was the only post office for a large district, so large, indeed, that others besides Mr. McLeod, had reason to complain as the following incident will prove. A certain Mrs. Fisher who lived near Elimville in Usborne Township, seven miles away from Exeter walked into the village one summer day, carrying ten dozen eggs for which the merchants allowed her five cents a dozen. The amount received, fifty cents, was so disappointingly small that she exclaimed:

"I'll not sell any more eggs at that price."

"What will you do with them?" asked the merchant

"We'll eat them" was her reply

But her troubles were not over for she had to walk two miles farther north to Hay post office for the mail Thence home, a long nine miles more, thus making what would be called today an almost incredible tramp of eighteen miles

From 1855 to 1875 the mail was carried by stage The first mail carrier was John Rattenbury who ran the mail stage from Goderich to London and back, a round trip on this run required a week Ted Crawley and William Brooks were the last mail carriers on the London Road Brooks was killed in a nasty stagecoach accident which is described in the chapter on transportation With the coming of the railway in late 1875 the services of the mail stages were no longer needed, at least for the towns on the railway Stages still had to be used to carry mail and passengers from Exeter to Dashwood, Grand Bend, St Marys, and other communities not reached by rail from Exeter The stage services to these places continued until well after the turn of the century and the introduction of motor vehicles

William Sanders served as post master until 1873 although his son had been named deputy postmaster for some years before 1873 as William's health was poor Sanders son also operated the telegraph when it came to Exeter in 1876 Miss Mary Sanders operated the telegraph service in the old Sanders house on Main Street until about 1925

1873 was an election year and the Reform Party under Alexander Mackenzie defeated MacDonald and the Tories As was common at that time, the postmasters were often changed when the government changed and in Exeter, "A died in the wool Grit," David Johns, a hardware merchant and tinsmith who had been in Exeter for about twelve years, was appointed postmaster It was said that even though he was a Grit, Johns was loved by the Tories as well, so the appointment was not unpopular Johns moved the post office from Sanders' building to his frame building on the north corner of James and Main Shortly after this move he transferred the post office to a frame building located somewhere in the vicinity of the present post office Then in 1875 Johns erected a two story brick building across the road from the Royal Hotel This building is now occupied by Lindenfields Johns also erected the house now the Hopper-Hockey Funeral home about the same time He moved the post office to the south store and a store operated in the north part of the building It is worth noting that John's salary in 1893 was eight hundred and sixty-five dollars per annum Johns died in 1898 "after an illness of several years' duration", but which took a more serious turn ... all that was mortal of postmaster Johns died on Monday morning ... he was a man of sterling qualities, his word being as good as his bond". Johns was a Methodist and a prime mover in the construction of the Main Street Church

Edward Christie another Liberal succeeded Johns as postmaster in 1898 Christie had been a cabinet maker, a hotel owner, operating the old Royal Hotel, he had owned a livery stable and had dealt in horses Christie's wife was a Carling The post office revenue, incidentally, in 1898 was $2442 60, in addition $1524 worth of money orders were issued The post office remained during Christie's time in the same location as it had been. Christie died in 1917 at the age of seventy-four, his son E J Christie died while never officially designated, acted as post master until 1917 when W J Russell, a returned veteran who had lost an arm at Ypres was appointed The local Conservative organization had recommended W J Carling for the office but the government chose the war veteran Russell instead Russell died in 1921 and was succeeded by Milton W Pfaff Pfaff was postmaster for about thirty years and was succeeded by Harvey Pfaff the present office holder and sixth postmaster in Exeter

The site of the present post office was purchased in 1914 At that time there were three buildings on the site, W G Beer's Harness shop, J Davis' feed store, and an old building that had been a blacksmith shop and then owned by Dr Roulston These buildings were torn down, Beer moved to the store where Russell's is now An open space between the Bank of Commerce and Heamans Hardware was then available for the new post office The open space remained for sixteen years — until 1930, most of the time it was an eyesore in the center of Exeter's Main Street although

Site of the Post Office

euphemistically designated Federal Park and occasionally beautified by the Horticultural Society

The government in 1930 finally erected a new post office It was officially opened on June 12, 1930; Milton Pfaff, the postmaster, Miss Caroline Davis and Miss Florence West were the staff members The building was erected by Beaver Bros of Crediton, with Traquair and Lindenfield doing the painting and tinsmithing The building cost $31,000

The Francistown post office still exists and is now designated as Hay post office

This outline of Exeter's business and commercial activity could not be complete without mention being made of the professions The medical profession has been well represented in Exeter over the years It is difficult to be sure which doctors were practicing at the same time in the village but it would appear that Exeter had between seven and ten doctors in the late 1870's and 1880's and 1890's These would have been Doctors Hyndman, Browning, Irving, Morden, Moore, Cowan, Lutz, and Rollins, Amos and Dr Hutchinson This group of doctors were the early medical practitioners in Exeter At least seven of them practiced simultaneously, when one adds the doctors in each of the small villages around Exeter it is apparent that the number of doctors was much larger then than it is at present in South Huron

The first area doctor was John Hyndman M C P S whose office was first located next door to Isaac Carling's store Hyndman as we mentioned previously was a son of Sheriff Hyndman, Huron's first Sheriff and early settler He first practiced in the Devon Settlement in 1851, moving to Exeter five or six years later About 1860 Dr Hyndman built the house on the west corner of Huron and Albert Streets It is reported that Hyndman's first patient in the area was Philip Andrew who had broken his leg in the bush, Hyndman gave him medical attention in one of the inns on the London Road, south of Exeter Hyndman was evidently just arriving on the stage when Andrew was brought in Dr Hyndman died in 1899 His obituary in the 'Times' reads in part as follows

> "The death of Dr Hyndman removes one, who for many years has gone in and out among us and carried the white flower of a stainless life Always a gentleman always zealous for the high standard of his profession his patients became his devoted friends and had for him a love and respect that is all too rare among the practitioners of our day No man whatever his calling, will be more missed than the white-haired courteous gentleman whose body racked often with pain continued at his post to the last . . . Dr Hyndman was a link in the history of the County of Huron, of which but little of the chain remains

> May the turf rest lightly on the kind heart that is still below. . . A most appropriate and touching service (was) conducted in the Trivitt Memorial Church. . . The pallbearers were David Mill, T. B. Carling, R. Pickard, Thom. Case, B. S. O'Neill and L. Hardy."

Dr. Hyndman's practice was assumed by his son Dr. Hugh K. Hyndman. Hugh was born in the family house on Huron Street on October 14, 1863, he graduated in medicine from the University of Western Ontario in 1886. Hugh Hyndman found time from a busy practice to cultivate the finer things in life, he was interested in the arts, grew flowers, was a keen horseman, Margaret Strang in an essay on Dr. Hyndman noted that he kept a stable of fine horses but that his practice was so wide "that there were times when he did not have a fresh horse in his stable with which to answer a country call". Hyndman also raised Airdales as well. He was an Anglican and a Conservative. He had some business interests, one of them being the telephone. He and his brother George started the telephone system which they later sold to the Fraynes and which was still operated by that family until very recently. In connection with this telephone system Margaret Strang makes the following remarks: "When the telephone came into general use the doctor was quick to see its possibilities in a rural community. But nobody knew anything about telephones in that district — who was going to build the lines and keep them in shape? He would do it himself — and he did. The Hyndman Telephone Line, with ramifications over many miles of adjacent townships, has been an institution in the district for twenty years. He ordered the phones, poles and equipment to be shipped in, hired the men to do the work, financed the building, set his own rental rates, arranged an exchange with the Bell Telephone Company, and his own brother kept the books in the doctor's office."

Dr. Hyndman did his best to keep up to date on new treatments and equipment in the field of medicine. "New treatments and new equipment came into vogue, and the doctor's library and equipment swelled accordingly, for he kept up with them all, though how and when he managed to read so widely only he knew. When he could go so far in diagnosis, but not far enough without the x-ray, he installed a small high-frequency machine and employed an office nurse to use the equipment, he did not only his own work but also a great deal for the local dentists.

"During the same year he opened the rooms above his office as a small private hospital. That was the year of the first influenza epidemic, and the new small hospital, small as it was, proved an inestimable boom to the stricken community. So highly was it commended that even after the epidemic passed it was kept on as a permanent affair. Here the doctor treated successfully some of his worst cases and here also, came prominent surgeons from the neighbouring cities to do major operations for those patients who preferred to remain near home.

"During the influenza epidemic in 1918, the doctor worked day and night till he fainted under the strain. He was put to bed with pneumonia and stayed there one week. The only help he could get was a fourth-year medical student, and long before he was able the doctor was back to work again. The heart-breaking strain of those long months told upon him, and in the next few years he developed angina pectoris. He knew what to expect, but kept quietly on, set all his affairs in order, kept his knowledge to himself and died without warning on March 6, 1926, after a day among his patients. The day of his funeral was one of blustering March winds and breaking roads yet time and distance could not keep the multitude of his friends and patients away. They came from far and near to add their token of appreciation of a good and great physician."

The practice was taken over by Dr. M. Fletcher who still carries this practice on after almost fifty years.

Another early doctor in Exeter was Dr. Winans. Winans was born in Simcoe in 1812, married Millison Anne Carson in 1837 and came to Exeter in 1863 where he opened a medical practice and drug store. He had previously practiced in Picton and Georgetown. Winans was an Exhorter and Local Preacher in the Methodist Church and a member of the Y.P.C.A. Dr. Winans had two sons both of whom led interesting but tragically short lives. George E. A. Winans the elder son became a doctor after first doing a year at the Toronto Normal School. He studied medicine with his uncle Dr. G. A. Carson of Whitby. He completed his studies without attending medical school and obtained his medical certificate in late 1864. In early 1865 like thousands of other Canadian boys he went to the war dividing the United States and joined the Union Army. He became a surgeon in Grant's army and was posted to Harewood Hospital near Washington. Among descriptions of the hospitals he wrote the following in a letter to his uncle:

> "Why they think no more of cutting off a leg or arm than you do in Canada of pulling a tooth ... I do not know how many arms and legs I have seen amputated ... They are heaped upon the floor in great piles and blood covers the floor so thickly that we might as well say we were wading in blood".

He went on to say that "medicines are dispensed lavishly, ounces of morphine are used every day, hogsheads of simple cerate ..."

The young doctor through overwork and exposure to unsanitary conditions in the hospital became ill and returned home to

Exeter where despite his father's loving care, he died on June 14, 1865 at the age of twenty-seven.

Winans' other son, William Henry was born in Rockford, Illinois in 1840 and moved with the family in 1852 to Picton, Canada. As was noted Dr. Winans was a devout Methodist and the religious atmosphere of the home prompted William to become a preacher. William had attended Toronto Normal School and in 1859 had taken a school in Stephen township near Exeter. He came under the guidance of Mr. Chapman the superintendent of the Exeter Circuit of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. He entered full time preaching and was attached to the Strathroy Circuit. It was noted that he eventually became "dissatisfied with the response of the people of Strathroy . . . and announced a prayer meeting at 5 a.m. followed by preaching at 7:30 a.m." We are led to believe that this disciplinary act had a salutary effect on the congregation at least for a time. This fanaticism was revealed again and again by Winans. Once in Tillsonburg he was preaching at a tight rope walkers' show to a crowd more interested in the show than his preaching but he persisted until a seller of beer and cider moved him on. He worked fanatically at his preaching so hard, in fact that he fell ill and died in Exeter May 30, 1866 at his father's home not quite a year after his brother George had died.

Dr. Winans died on March 24, 1874. His medical practice and drug store were taken over by Dr. Lutz who remained until 1903 when the drug store was taken over by W. Cole. The store was located where Bob's Variety is now.

Dr. Young Cowan, born in Belfast in 1834, had an office on James Street just across from the Central Hotel, about where Russells' side entrance is now. He was in Exeter in the early 1860's. Dr. Cowan was a great horse man and is reported to have built a fine new stable which was equipped with electricity and a telephone. Apparently Dr. Cowan's interest in horses was greater than his interest in patients at times, since it is reported in the Times in 1884 that a man called at Cowan's office one night seeking medical aid for his wife. He said that "Dr. Cowan met me with a scowl, hissed out an oath from between his teeth and shut the door in my face". It was further reported in the Times that the poor man called on three more doctors before getting one to go with him. Dr. Lutz finally went. Dr. Cowan practiced in Exeter from the late 1860's to about 1893 when he moved to Galt. Cowan later became Chairman of Pathology and Bacteriology at the Chicago Post Graduate Medical School. He eventually returned to Canada and died in London at the age of eighty-six. His practice in Exeter was taken over by Dr. Amos whose medical training had been obtained at Trinity College, Toronto, Glasgow, London, and Edinborough. Dr. Amos lived on

Andrew Street, was a Presbyterian and a Liberal. He sold out to Dr. H. R. Bright.

Other early doctors included Dr. Morden, who advertised as a Homoeopathic Surgeon and whose office was "next to Bawden's Marble Works", Morden practiced in the 1870's. There was Dr. Irving with an office south of Grigg's store. Irving later practiced in Kirkton. Dr. R. C. Moore was another early doctor.

Dr. Hutchinson was in Exeter in the 1870's and owned the famous race horse "Galt Reporter". Dr. James Ardah Rollins practiced from the 1880's until 1905. Rollins although married to the sister of Thomas Greenway was himself an active Conservative. Rollins was born in Biddulph Township in 1847 and graduated from medical school in 1869. He sold his practice to Dr. A. F. Molloy who sold to Dr. Quakenbush.

Certainly the most well-known medical personality in Exeter must have been Dr. Joseph W. Browning M.D., M.C.P.S. Dr. Browning claimed to be the oldest practicing doctor in Canada, he was still practicing when he died in his one hundredth year on December 24, 1942. Joseph W. Browning was born in Glastonbury, Somerset on November 21, 1843, he and his family emigrated to Upper Canada in 1845, settling in Markham. Browning's father was a watchmaker and telegrapher. While in Markham a sister of Browning operated the telegraph for the father who was the Markham agent for the Whitby and Georgian Bay Telegraph Company. Young Joseph Browning learned the art of telegraphy by observing his sister, and took over the job himself at the age of thirteen when his sister was married. Browning in later years told of copying reports of the Crimean War as they came over the wire, he never forgot the telegrapher's art and could still operate the key in his nineties.

In addition to learning telegraphy Browning also began learning his father's watch and clock making trade. He decided, however, that medical studies were to be his chief interest and he left Markham to attend Victoria College, University of Toronto. In order to put himself through medical school he worked as a photographer, wrote fiction, skits and news reports for newspapers. Following his university work he completed his medical training under Dr. Rolfe.

In 1866 Browning moved to Hay Township and on July 3, 1867 he opened his drug store, the Dominion Medical Laboratory, and medical practice in the store which still bears the Browning name. At that time it was one door north of N. Davis' blacksmith shop. Dr. Browning carried on his practice from the same office until his death seventy-nine years later, although he did not really practice much medicine during the last two or three years of his life. His was a remarkable career During his practice he is supposed to have brought around three thousand babies into the world That he worked hard is attested to by the fact that he "used up nineteen horses" during his practice These horses pulled Browning's gig described as a cross between a jinrickshaw and a carretara, "the like of which never existed before or since" He enjoyed the practice of medicine and remarked

> "I can really say that I never practiced for money for whenever I took a patient I hated like the devil to be licked I wanted to cure the patient if I never got a farthing"

That he should have lived such a long and active life surprised even Browning himself in a way since he had been sickly throughout his early life He remarked that he had "never been three months out of a doctor's care until I became a doctor myself" He attributed his longevity to his "moderate" habits and "hard work"; he did not drink, but he did smoke cigars His abstention from alcoholic drink was probably a result of having non-drinking parents whose wedding was reported to have been the first "dry" wedding in that area of Somerset where liquor, lard cider, and hard perry flowed abundantly He ate sparingly although he did increase his weight from the ninety-eight pounds he weighed on July 3, 1867 to one hundred and seventy-five pounds by 1941 He was very careful in his eating habits suggesting, accurately enough that "people dig their graves with their teeth"

He was a man who had wide interests as we have already noted Medicine, and pharmacology, telegraphy, watch making, photography, writing, reading, water color painting were among his interests, at the age of ninety-three he took a course in dramatics and elocution As we have noted he practiced both his medical and pharmaceutical professions until he was well into his ninety's, when he was ninety-three he renewed a prescription for a man who had obtained the original order twenty-two years before On another occasion he renewed a prescription forty-eight years old On both occasions it took him only a few minutes to pick out the prescription from his well-maintained records

In 1937 at the age of ninety-three, J W Browning was reported to be the oldest living graduate of Victoria College, the oldest active physician in Canada and the longest on the job

Dr Browning's wife, whom he married after coming to Exeter was the daughter of John McDonnell and Dorothy Balkwill She died in 1931 Their family included two sons who became doctors — Dr J Harry Browning and Dr William E Browning, both of whom were active in establishing a hospital in Caledonia, Minnesota George Fenwick described Dr Browning in the following words:

> "dear Dr Browning the truest, most faithful, most capable most conscientious and self-sacrificing human being that either an individual or a community could claim as a friend For steeped as he was body and soul in that divine largeness which was the better part of him, stressed to administer to the stricken ones where and when the call came, be it night or day through darkness, sunshine or storm through slush and mud snowdrifts, or hard, rutted country roads leading out into the sparsely settled and almost inaccessible parts of a raw up-building country where stricken ones lived in shacks, often hid from view of the roads so that they were difficult to locate, and where the very primitiveness of the living offered him less than no aid at all in his administrations and where he had to fight ignorance, sloth and unsanitary conditions in addition to the disabilities of his patients — but where the very man in him never faltered and where his admirable courage never fagged where his self-sacrificing self and his will to do was always in the ascendency, where the surety to aid or cure was always a paramount part of him, where kindness of heart and optimism of spirit flooded the sick room to the elimination of all else and to the entirety of himself — this was the man Dr Browning, often sorely tried but never found to be wanting in all those close unto seventy-five years of his special calling and in his toiling among the good people of Exeter and surrounding country And he stands today an embodiment of the highest type of citizen and public benefactor that any community in any part of the civilized world could lay claim to and honor'

These are some of the early doctors in Exeter In addition to the resident doctors, Exeter like the other small towns and villages in Ontario experienced the periodic visits of doctors who advertised themselves as specialists Such visiting doctors usually set up temporary quarters in one of the hotels and advertised in the papers and sent out leaflets For example in 1888 Dr Sinclair, "a specialist in heart and lungs" advertised his presence at the Commercial Hotel The 'Advocate' urged its readers to see Dr Sinclair saying "remember this fellow is none of your damn Yankee Quacks" A herbalist was at the Central Hotel on one occasion who cured "all diseases" Dr Thomas Speer was another visiting physician in the 1880's He was billed as "Thomas Speer M D , M C P S , and G S , and L T C D The Great East Indian Physician and Surgeon" His leaflets suggested that he was "satisfied to relinquish previous professional emoluments, and confine himself to the treatment of Nasal Catarrh, Cancer, Consumption, Bronchitis, Asthma, Skin Diseases, Rheumatism, Sciatica, Fever Sores, Salt Rheum, Scrofulous Diseases, liver diseases, kidney and Urinary troubles, Bright's disease, Dropsy, Strictures, Pimples on the face, Malaria, Ague, Diseases of women and diseases of a special, difficult and dangerous character" Dr Spoer suggested that by going around the country treating such ailments he could render "greater service to the afflicted" than if he remained in one place

A Dr W E Dempsey, osteopath and chiropractor spent about a year in Exeter before moving on His advertising began with the question

"Is Nature Starting to Foreclose the Mortgage on Your Health?" He treated all manner of ailments from asthma, appendicitis, constipation and female weaknesses to St Vitus Dance and everything in between

Other Exeter Doctors included Dr McGillicuddy who was succeeded by Dr M G Graham, Dr Graham practiced from 1919 to 1929 — where Dr Read's practice is now — before going to Formosa as a medical missionary Graham was succeeded by Dr Dunlop Over more recent years such names as Dr J E Jackson, Dr R H Doyle, Dr F J Milner, Drs Butson, Schulthies, Read, Gans and Ecker come to mind Dr John Ward (Chiropractic and Electric Treatments) practiced for well over thirty years until the 1950's Mention should also be made perhaps of the mid-wives such as "Granny" Heywood who brought one hundred and two babies into the world

While not Exeter doctors the following medical practioners were Exeter boys — Dr Hugh Creech, Dr T Harry Seldon, who joined the Mayo Clinic, Dr J H Browning, Dr W E Browning, Dr T H Legett, born in Exeter, June 4, 1878, he became President of the Canadian Medical Association, Dr Stuart Stanbury, Dr L L Hooper Dr Margaret Strang should also be mentioned Dr Strang practiced for many years in the frontier area of Alberta

Dr Hugh Creech "distinguished himself in research at the Institute for Cancer Research in Philadelphia"

Among the early dentists to practice in Exeter were H L Billings whose office was over O'Neill's Bank and who advertised "nitrous oxide for painless extraction", G T Wilkie practiced on Fridays at the Commercial Hotel in the 1870's There was also Henry Kinsman who had been born in Cornwall, England in 1831 and who tried carpentry, book and stationery sales before taking up dentistry He came to Exeter in 1871 first practicing in an office south of Bell's Bakery and then in one located above Stanbury's law office Kinsman extracted "Teeth without pain using vegetable vapour" He died in 1903 of "an internal growth" and was succeded by his son A R Kinsman who was joined in 1906 by G F Roulston "a thorough mechanic", the offices were over Carling's law office Roulston continued the practice for years being succeeded eventually by Dr Corbett, Dr J A Ellis had an office in Fanson's Block in the 1880's and 90's and specialized in "artificial teeth" H R Abbott came periodically to Exeter in the 1870's and set up in the Central Hotel, he was billed as a "specialist in gold fillings" C Cartwright took over Billings' office above O'Neills in 1885 and when he went to California a few years later his son W E Cartwright took over

Other dentists that practiced in Exeter include Dr David Alton Anderson, whose office was over Elliott's law office opposite the Central Hotel, Dr William Lawson, Dr G S Atkinson, and presently of course, Drs Cowen and Gratton as well as Dr Corbett Dr Atkinson shot himself while cleaning his rifle in Bayfield in 1935; Atkinson had been a major in the first World War and was given a military funeral

The veterinary profession has been represented in Exeter for over one hundred years One of the first "vets" — if not the first, was William Sweet whose office was "opposite Hooper and Bissetts Grocery" which as we noted was one door south of Samwell and Pickards Dr J Fishburn was another early vet Drs Tennant and Tennant had an office where the library now stands, the office was north of Russells blacksmith shop and just west of Joseph Bawdens' house and pig barn Tennant sold to Dr Ramsay, in 1904 Other vets include Dr Henry Corsault whose office was in Bakers' Livery Barn on James Street Dr Houze, Drs Vinning and Sweet whose offices were on the corner of John and Andrew, Dr J G Reid and Dr E S Steiner whose office was first in the old McDonnell Horse Barn on John Street The present veterinarian is Dr Roelofson

The first lawyer to open an office in Exeter was Benjamin Valeck Elliott, who came to Exeter in 1860 after having studied and practiced law in Plymouth, Devonshire Elliott was a Devon man, his birthplace being Kingsand, Devon in 1815 Elliott's office was directly across from the Central Hotel Elliott built the house occupied later by Dr Dunlop; he had ten children, seven sons and three daughters He was "always a staunch Conservative" and an Anglican He died in 1899 of an "affliction of the bladder" in his eighty-fourth year His obituary reads in part

> "One after another the veterans of Exeter's business circle are departing from among us, leaving only the lustre of their untarnished names and the example of their exemplary lives for the guidance and emulation of the younger generation his life affords a striking example of the success which invariably attends devotion to duty"

Elliott's wife died in 1915 at the age of ninety B V Elliott had been joined in 1897 by F W Gladman who practiced law in Exeter for some years after Elliott's death going into an office with J G Stanbury a few years later J G Stanbury had come to Exeter in 1898 and entered the office of R H Collins who had come to Exeter about 1887. Collins died in May, 1900 and the facts of his life are best illustrated by quoting his obituary.

> "In the death of this gentleman who passed away at his residence on James Street, Exeter loses one of the most brilliant and promising barristers in Ontario. His legal career has been spent in our midst and for many years past he has been a familiar figure on our streets. A man of striking presence and oratorical power, while in health no public meeting was considered properly conducted without him and his great abilities were given in the most good natured and enthusiastic way. In politics a strong Liberal, he has pulled his party through many a wordy contest and was known as a first-class speaker throughout Ontario. Gifted with a magnificent voice and thoroughly conversant with music, many will remember the Trivitt Memorial church choir as he led it and the thrilling power of his sympathetic tones in many a sacred passage. His success as a lawyer was phenomenal ... he could sway a jury, mass an array of legal facts."

Collins had been born in Bandon, County Cork, Ireland in 1854. He had come to Canada with his mother in 1861. He taught public school in Shakespeare, high school in Stratford, but eventually entered the office of H. W. Hall, Barristers. The office was in the Samwell Block. There he studied law for several years. In 1887 he passed his bar examinations without attending college and began his own practice, taking over Hall's office. He suffered for months from a growth on the sciatic nerve and "bore with wonderful patience agony of the most excruciating nature". Collin's office was in Samwell's Block where Hall's had been.

In addition, then, to the legal firms of Elliott and Gladman, Collins and Stanbury there was also the firm of Dickson and Carling. All of these firms existed simultaneously giving Exeter six lawyers at the turn of the century. L. G. Dickson practiced in Exeter from the 1890's for several decades. "Judge Dickson was born in Pembroke in 1860, and received his primary education in the Pembroke Schools, and later attended Toronto University. After his graduation he studied the rudiments of law in the office of L. E. Dancey in Seaforth for two years, afterwards studying at Osgoode Hall from which he graduated in 1885." He became a successful lawyer in Exeter being the senior member of Dickson and Carling, until his appointment in 1916 to the senior judgeship in Huron County. Dickson was described as "an admirable judge". "He was severe with seasoned or graceless offenders, he was merciful to those more sinned against than sinning." Dickson was an Anglican and a Conservative. He died in 1923 when a fatal heart attack struck him in his office. His wife was Jenny MacDonnell.

The junior partner in the Dickson and Carling firm was Isaac Routledge Carling, son of old Isaac Carling. Isaac Jr. lived in the old Carling house on Huron Street. The house was maintained in magnificent style. The following article describing the Carling estate was written by J. M. Southcott in 1932, and is given here since the Carling house was the most luxurious home in Exeter.

> “Lovers of nature in our beautiful village should spend an hour or two on the spacious grounds belonging to Mr. Isaac R. Carling K. C. It was our privilege to spend an hour or more exploring and enjoying the beauties of this fine property. The splendid butternut and Japanese Walnut trees give ample shade on a hot day to those who wish to rest or sit quietly while enjoying the delightful views across spacious lawns or admiring the hedgerows of tall evergreens besides many other trees scattered here and there. Taken altogether it reminds one of some parklike surroundings of large and prosperous institutions. Viewed from the street the fine Corinthean like columns in the front of the home give an impressive appearance to the splendid residence in which he and his sisters live and remind one of the specimens of Grecian and Roman architecture that have come down to us. But it is when we approach from the rear of the property that our sense of the beautiful in gardens is aroused and satisfied. Leading up from the rear entrance is a fine cement walk about nine feet wide and lined with flowers on each side. On the left there in great luxuriance many varieties of the old fashioned but beautiful Stocks, that our grandmothers loved, interspersed with Zinnias, Nicotines, Phlox, etc. On the right side were foliages, snapdragons, ageratum, pansies. Then as we travelled farther we came across splendid speciment of bergamot, rudbeckia purpuria and the somewhat scarce but beautiful amarilas. We must not omit other flowers such as amaranthus, hydrangeas, goldenglow and tricoma. As we wandered around we passed over to the west side meeting surprises everywhere we went when lo we came upon his rose garden with roses most beautiful and twice the size they are generally. His collection of gladioli was a delight to see. The vegetable gardens were just as fine as the flowers.

Carling practiced law in Exeter until his death in 1934. Carling continued the family's tradition in politics and in religion, being staunchly Conservative and Anglican.

J. G. Stewart Stanbury joined Collins in 1898. After the death of both Collins and Elliott, Stanbury and Gladman formed a legal firm. Stanbury practiced in Exeter from 1898 to 1935. During these thirty-seven years he was “a pillar of the community” serving on the Board of Education, Horticulture Society, and the Huron Liberal Association. Like Carling, Stanbury was an avid gardener, he won many prizes at both the Western Fair and the Canadian National Exhibition. Stanbury was born in Bayfield, the son of a doctor. One of Stanbury's own sons, Stewart, also became a doctor. Stewart Stanbury enjoyed an active medical career making important contributions in the development of insulin, in research on tuberculosis, and in work with the Red Cross. Another son, Richard, is now a senator and an important figure in the Liberal Party organization in Canada and Robert, present Federal Minister of Revenue. W. M. Martin who became a Liberal Premier of Saskatchewan articled in the Gladman and Stanbury office. In 1935 Stanbury was made King's Council and in 1936 he was appointed to a judgeship in Lincoln County.

The Gladman-Stanbury practice was assumed in 1941 by William G. Cochrane and is now in the hands of Peter Raymond. Interestingly this practice has always been politically Liberal. The Carling-Dickson practice conversely has always been politically Conservative. When Carling died in 1934 the practice was assumed by James Morley. Elmer D. Bell purchased the practice in 1946. Bell had started a practice in Seaforth and Brussels before the war, having graduated from Osgoode in 1932 after serving in the Canadian Army and distinguishing himself with the artillery. After his war service Bell came to Exeter where he has practiced ever since in partnership with C. V. Laughton. Elmer Bell served the Progressive Conservative Party in many ways including service as President of the Ontario Party.

Over the years other lawyers, notaries and other legal officials have had practices in Exeter. Some of these whose names are known were M. McFadden, the firm of Malcomson, Watson and Cuddy, J. Elliott, C. F. Clarke and A. Horney.

For over a century then, Exeter has had an active business community. The preceding pages do little more than recall the names of some of the people who were involved in business of one kind or another in Exeter during the past one hundred and twenty-five years or so. The business community seems to have always been a prosperous one. In 1902 the Times made the following remarks:

> 'Exeter has long been noted as one of the most substantial towns in Western Ontario and situated as it is in the centre of the finest farming section in Huron County, the Banner County in the province, it is well able to hold its own. While Exeter has not been visited by booms it has always enjoyed a healthy and steady growth ... Our town has always enjoyed the reputation of having among its merchants the most enterprising, up-to-date businessmen to be found in the province."

The Times was always urging the citizens to keep the business community prosperous. "Be loyal to your town" said the Times. "The merchants you patronize may someday be able to direct a dollar into your pocket. In any event you needn't look for work or patronage from the Toronto departmental sharks."

Generally the citizens of Exeter and area have supported the

local business community and Exeter has been a prosperous town. Even during the Depression this area probably suffered less than many other Ontario communities. Exeter and the adjacent agricultural townships continue to prosper and hold their own despite the continuing centralizing trend in Ontario. This trend to centralization in the giant urban areas is taking its toll in rural and small town Ontario, but the south part of Huron is not losing population to the extent that many other areas of the province are.

Other chapters will deal with the type of businesses that were not mentioned in this chapter.

chapter 3

Cigarettes and Whiskey and Wild, Wild, Women
Hotels, Booze, Temperance

"Inside the door ajar
They hid the liquor bar
I have a horror of those shutters,
For there the wounded spirit flutters,
Ah! many go therein
To find the path of sin"

(*from a Temperance Poem 1887*)

Hotels, inns and taverns were among the first services established in a pioneer area. They were essential and there were many of them located along the roads. From London to Goderich there were thirty or forty inns as early as the 1840's. In or quite near to Exeter there were a number of primitive inns established in the early years of settlement. Regulations governing these inns were established by the township councils. Usborne township passed a bylaw on October 3, 1854 regulating taverns. The regulations included, "no drinking of intoxicating liquors on Sundays", card playing, dice and gambling were prohibited The minimum number of beds that the tavern keeper had to provide were five He also had to maintain a driving shed and an open shed for a minimum of five teams, "also a house of convenіency"

McConnell's Inn was established near where the Presbyterian Church now stands in Exeter This was the first 'hotel' in Exeter and was established in 1833 as a result of Canada Company instructions to McConnell to establish the inn David McConnell operated an inn in Francistown in the 1840's The Balkwill family operated a small tavern in the "Devonshire Settlement" a short distance south of Exeter at the Crediton Road Also south of Exeter on the corner was Joseph Quick's "Black Horse Inn" established gradually in the 1830's, this inn was on a farm later owned by a Mr Walker about two miles south of the town On the Usborne side of the London Road the tavern licence cost eight pounds in 1857 Usborne charged only five pounds for licences off the London Road

There were inns every few miles along the settlement roads and they provided much needed stopping places where the travellers could rest and eat They were oases in the Upper Canadian wilderness Once coach and stage travel became regular operations the inns were the stopping points There were dozens of inns and taverns within a ten mile radius of Exeter, however, a survey of all of these hostelries is beyond the scope of this work which will deal primarily with Exeter

The hotels not only provided stops for the stages, and for those settlers who walked, where food, rest and lodging could be obtained, they also provided whiskey Whiskey was cheap throughout Upper Canada, seldom exceeding twenty-five cents for an Imperial gallon, it remained this inexpensive for decades "Upper Canadian Nectar" was the label frequently applied to the raw whiskey of Ontario Our fair province acquired a reputation of being one of the most drunken areas known Visitors and observers were "appalled by the destruction and the waste of human resources in Upper Canada from the drinking of raw whiskey" The author of "Ryerson of Upper Canada" also commented that "cheap rot gut whiskey was the quickest means of blotting out the disappointment and the desperation The spectacle of sodden, ugly drunkeness was familiar to all those who lived in Upper Canada " Grain was cradled, barns raised, potatoes hoed, evenings passed, trees cut, all with the solace and assistance of whiskey "Nights on the trail had to be endured at zero and below Travellers believed they could survive the cold if they had a bottle of spirits tucked into their blankets The folklore worked and many travellers survived " There was little restraint on the trade Farmers could pick up a gallon for twenty-five cents to quench their thirst as they worked in their fields. Stores sold liquor of all kinds. Distilleries were dotted across the country supplying the needs of the settlers. "It was a common thing to find a barrel of whiskey on the front porch of a house with a ladle nearby. It was the hospitality of the owner that put it there. The visitor was welcome to take a tot when arriving and departing." Naturally there was a reaction to this widespread drunkenness in Ontario. By the 1870's a strong Temperance movement was flourishing in the province. Doctors and medicine producers were advertising cures for drunkenness. The Exeter area was no different from the rest of Ontario as it passed through the pioneer period of taverns, hotels, liquor in stores, widespread drinking and then the movements for control and Temperance. We will look briefly at these activities in Exeter.

As we noted, the first inn was McConnell's just south of the river. It may have been called the Red Elephant Hotel but this is unconfirmed. We also noted David McConnell's inn which was on the site of Digory Braund's house, near the present location of John Snell's garage. David McConnell's inn is mentioned in the minutes of December, 1842, of the united townships of Usborne, Stephen and Hay. It stated that notice of a meeting of these townships was posted in David McConnell's inn, William Balkwill's inn and William Case's house. The meeting on the first Monday in January, 1843, was to be held at David McConnell's inn.

William Balkwill had a tavern from the 1840's to the 1860's. Robert Armstrong was listed as bartender. By the 1860's there were more elaborate hotels making their appearance in the growing village. In the early 1860's mention was made in various sources of Drew's Hotel, The Exeter Hotel, operated by James Gordon and at other times owned by Richard Roach and managed by W. H. Adams. The Exeter Hotel in 1871 was operated by Thomas Elston. The British Exchange Hotel operated by John McBride was referred to only once and may have been erroneously included in the list of Exeter businesses. The names Lorne Hotel, Queens Hotel and the Union Hotel also appeared as well as the Sable Hotel which was operated by Robert Bissett in the 1860's. It is difficult to be certain of the location of some of the early hotels, some may be the same hotels that developed later under different names. In any case during the period of the past one hundred years Exeter has gone from the position of having many hotels to having none. Only one of the old hotel buildings still stands, this is the business block at the corner of Anne and Main Streets now occupied by a bake shop and other stores; this building was the Commercial Hotel. The others are gone. The Central Hotel, Exeter's largest was demolished to provide space for the British Mortgage and Trust — now the Victoria and Grey Trust Company office. The Mansion House was on the southwest corner of Main and Huron Streets, the Metropolitan Hotel was on the site now occupied by Dobbs' car lot at the corner of Wellington and Main Streets. The Station Hotel also known as the Exeter Temperance House was on property near the railway now occupied by the canning factory. The Royal Hotel was on Main Street near the site of the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Exeter North Hotel or Walper Hotel was on the corner of the Lake Road and the London Road where the Guenther-Tuckey lot is now located. Balkwill's Tavern was located near the former Silas Handford house on Main Street. A brief sketch of each of these hostelries is given below. It is likely that no more than five inns existed in the village simultaneously. In 1874 five tavern licences were issued to W. E. Wilkins, E. J. Wilkins, William Drew, James Towers and Edward Christie; two shop licences were issued. In 1875 five licences to Drew's Hotel (William Drew), The Britannia House (John Pratt), The Francistown Hotel (James Towers), The Mansion House (William Hawkshaw) and W. E. Wilkins, the Central Hotel.

The Walper Hotel

In 1875 the village council limited by law the number of taverns to five. The village appointed an Inspector of Taverns whose job it was to enforce the regulations governing taverns, including the hours that liquor could be sold. In Exeter sales had to cease at ten p.m. but could begin at five a.m. in the morning.

1. The Walper Hotel

This hostelry was a large building in Francistown and operated under various names, the Exeter North Hotel, The Exeter North Temperance House and the Francistown Hotel. It was operated in the late 1860's and early 1870's by James Towers Abel Walper acquired it and then in 1877 sold it to H Martin In the 1860's the hotel was considered to be one of the finest in the country It had been erected in the early 1850's possibly by Matthew Rogers In the 1860's it was operated by James Towers as the Francistown Hotel Walper probably bought it from Towers Walper in 1877 went to Berlin (Kitchener) and evidently had something to do with the construction of Kitchener's now famous Walper House

The hotel was across the Lake Road from Fenwick's Mill and drew trade from the farmers coming into the mill with their grain George Fenwick, a son of the mill owner, told the following stories about the Walper Hotel On the occasion of the Fenwick's arrival in Exeter from Zurich one of the Fenwick children pointed to the imposing structure and asked

"What's that over there, Mother?"

"That's a den of iniquity and I want you boys to keep away from there," replied Mother

"What's a den of inickety?" asked the boy

"It's a terrible place where they drink that terrible whiskey and fight — so never go near the place", was Mrs Fenwick's ominous warning

But boys being boys, young George did go into Walper's saloon Young George had acquired a cheese sandwich from the bar and Mr Walper handed him a mug of beer saying, "Here sonny, take this and quench your thirst "

"I don't want your old whiskey", was the reply

"Whiskey, ho, ho, ha, ha, why that's good old lager beer", Walper told the boy

Fenwick no doubt recalling his mother's warning was about to pour the contents of the mug on the floor when a hand shot out and snatched the glass, "No you don't, sonny", and a gnarled old farmer drained the mug

The Walper Hotel had a reputation for being a wild place It was referred to as "a noisy saloon" The Times carried an item in 1873 which illustrated the noisy nature of the saloon It seemed that "a couple of navvies who had been away with the volunteers", stopped in at the hotel They eventually became drunk and noisy and started fighting During the fight "one of them named McDonald had his nose bitten off by Bruce Brownlee" Dr Morden tried to repair the "hanging flesh and bone"

Attached to the south end of the hotel was the store operated by Trick and Currelly Thomas Currelly had come to Exeter some time in the 1860's or early 1870's Currelly's wife was a Treble whose family had come from Devonshire Currelly's son, Charles T Currelly became the first curator of the Royal Ontario Museum

and a world renowned archeologist. In his book "I Brought The Ages Home", Currelly has the following harsh words about Exeter's hotels:

> "There were four hotels where the board was three dollars a week, or a dollar a day for transients, and where the main living was made by selling beer and whiskey. The hotel keepers were socially outside the pale and, I think, deservedly because a more contemptible crowd it was hard to find. The wholesale liquor people who did business with them said that theirs was the hardest, meanest trade it was possible to imagine. A few loafers hung around the hotels, and the only time I ever saw a man horsewhipped was when an old, lame, enormously fat hotel keeper horsewhipped a strong young man. Though I was only five or six years old, I can remember this young man crying while the big horsewhip came down rhythmically across his back and legs."

Currelly is being overly harsh and is no doubt using the one hotel to make an unwarranted generalization. The hotel he talks about is most surely the Walper Hotel since the young Currelly would not likely be wandering from Francistown a mile or more to the site of the other hotels. Who the fat hotel keeper was is difficult to say. Abel Walper sold out to Martin in 1877 and Martin sold to L. W. Gudwig in 1884. Gudwig had plans to erect a brewery on Fenwick's property and since he was manager of Carling's Lager Beer Department he knew the business. However, this industry did not develop. Later on another Walper operated the hotel. In 1892 the hotel was renovated and painted.

Currelly as a boy not only had the goings on at the hotel and the mill to watch he also had Digory Braund's blacksmith shop and Alex MacPherson's Wagon Shop next to the store to provide a summer day's occupation. Braund, by the way, was the first organist at the Bible Christian Church in Exeter.

As the nineteenth century came to a close, the Exeter North Hotel ceased to be the wild noisy establishment that it was for thirty years and became a Temperance House first under Leonard McTaggart's ownership and then John Morley's. It was eventually sold to George Armstrong who tore part of it down. Les Gibson tore the rest of the building down when he erected a service station on the corner.

It was in the Walper Hotel that Lancelot Hardy, a long time Reeve of the village, scared a poor tramp half to death. Hardy and his cronies were sitting around the saloon when some fellows dragged the tramp before Hardy's table. Hardy held a mock court and ordered the tramp on pain of tar and feathers, never to set foot in Exeter again. The tramp was last seen running north towards Rodgerville as fast as he could run.

The Walper Hotel, then, provided a colorful chapter in the history of Exeter. One comment should be added to Currelly's view that the hotel keepers were some kind of monsters. It is clear that in Exeter this was not generally true. Hotel keepers like Oke, Acheson, Hawkshaw, Leathorn, and others were among Exeter's leading citizens and not in the least deserving of Currelly's condemnation.

2. The Royal Hotel

This inn was located in "the heart of the business part of Exeter" where the Bank of Nova Scotia and Squire's house is now located. It was a large frame structure and had been built in the 1860's or even the late 1850's. It was a stage coach stop until the railway ended the London Road stage run. The Donnellys used the Royal as their Exeter headquarters for their stage operation. During the years before 1876 it was called the Union Hotel and was owned by E. J. Wilkins. In 1875 it was called the Britannia House and was operated by John R. Wilkins who sold it on May 18, 1876 to E. Christie who renamed it the Royal. Christie sold it to Richard Atkinson but seems to have got it back again by 1878. In 1883 it ended its life as a hotel when Christie sold it to Mr. Senior who used it as a photographic studio. It was used by various businessmen for various purposes until 1922 when Mr. Hooper purchased the old building and shortly thereafter tore it down.

3. Commercial Hotel

One of Exeter's early important businessmen E. Drew built this hotel about 1860. In the early 1870's it was acquired by John Hawkshaw who had previously operated a stage line which ran stages to London, Clinton, St. Marys and other points. More has been said elsewhere about the stage line. After he acquired the hotel he still retained a great interest in horses and owned many fine racers. John Hawkshaw died in the 1920's at the age of ninety-two. The "Times" commented that besides being an Anglican and a Conservative, he was a "well-informed, and highly respected resident". John sold the hotel to T. W. (Wes) Hawkshaw in the 1880's; Wes became a cigar salesman when he sold to W. Hawkshaw in 1901. In 1904 a Mr. Hanham purchased the business. In later years it was operated by Thomas Newell who was in 1914 the subject of the year's most talked about trial in Exeter. He was brought before, not one, but three magistrates, — W. D. Sanders, Joseph Hawkins, and J. Moir — on a charge of selling intoxicants to minors. The charge was dismissed when Newell proved that he was serving only 'pop' and 'local option beer'.

It was said that the Commercial in the 1880's had the most "obliging chambermaids" in Exeter. One named "Rosie" was especially noteworthy.

The Commercial Livery and Feed Barn was located across the road where the Beverage plant is now situated A man could stable, feed and water his horse for fifteen cents at the Livery barn A garage was erected years later on the site

C B Snell eventually acquired in 1916 the Commercial Hotel and converted it to other business operations about 1920

4 The Metropolitan Hotel

This one was located at the corner of Main and 'Station' Streets and was built some time after the railway came in 1876 The first station was at the end of the street and the owner, no doubt, hoped to attract station business and London Road business There was a farmers' grain market across the road where the grocery store now stands Here men like Lance Hardy, Cobbledick, Spicer and others would negotiate grain purchases Undoubtedly, transactions were completed over a drink in the Metropolitan's barroom Mr Johnson's little repair shop was Cobbledick's office and a story is told of how Lancelot Hardy is supposed to have put a cow in the office one night Cobbledick discovered the shambles in the morning and was furious but he evidently never did find out who did it

Various people owned this hotel including W Zinger, Henry Cantelon, W Anderson, and James Campbell The last owner was Mr Smith who closed out the building's history as a hotel in the 1930's In 1937 it became a chick hatchery, somehow this seems like an ignominious end for a hotel The old hotel was torn down in 1970

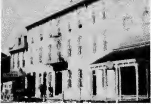
5 The Mansion House

The Mansion House was built in 1874 by R Bissett for W Hawkshaw on the corner of Main and Huron Streets It was thirty-four feet by forty-six feet and hadaccommodationfor thirty five guests It was "fitted out in great taste" Hawkshaw sold it to a Mr Brimacombe who sold it in 1890 to "Squire' Robert Leathorn The Squire was a town character, he generally headed the parades "astride a white horse" followed by the band After Leathorn, James Shaddock and Charles Wilson were owners of the hotel In 1902 the advertisements said "This house is all that a first class dollar a day house should be " The hotel was torn down in 1912 and three houses were erected in the place where it stood, by Wesley Snell and Arnold Marchand

6 The Exeter Station Hotel

This was built in 1876 by James and George Willis on the site of a tavern stand owned by Isaac Carling who sold the site to George Willis This hotel served the railway public for thirty years

In 1906 it was known as Mitchell's Temperance House and it was sold in that year to the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company who tore it down in order to erect the factory.



The Central Hotel and Stage Coach about 1880

7. The Central Hotel

James Oke acquired this, Exeter's most well-known and "commodious" hotel in the mid 1870's. This hotel had previously been operated by W. E. Wilkins who may have built it in the early 1860's. It came to be known by Western Ontario's travelling public as having an excellent dining room with "attentive waiters who anticipate your wants". It advertised "the best wet goods and cigars" and was "from a sanitary point of view unexcelled". With "attentive hostlers", a genial clerk — John Mallott — and a first class bartender — Thomas Oke — the Central did a fine business. Of course, it was not free from some criticism. Occasionally there were "too many drunks" in the barroom and sometimes the bar did get noisy but usually the Central maintained its good reputation.

On December 13, 1888 the Hotel was sold by James Oke to Joseph Acheson's two sons James and Thomas. It will be remembered that Joseph Acheson was one of Exeter's first businessmen, opening the second store to operate in Exeter. It will also be recalled that Joseph Acheson presented the town with Victoria Park in the 1880's. The old Acheson house was directly across the street from the Carling home and was demolished when the present nurses' residence was erected in 1957. The house had been occupied over the years by several prominent citizens, Mr. Rollins, the Grist Mill owner, A. E. Bennett, J. A. Stewart, R. N. Rowe, William Penhale and Dr. Steiner. Thomas Acheson was the father of Charles and Amelia Acheson the last owners and operators of the Central Hotel. The Acheson brothers paid twelve thousand, five hundred dollars for the hotel and were according to the Times "young men of ability, being endowed with enterprise and indomitable zeal for all things pertaining to public welfare". Shortly after the purchase, W. T. Acheson married Florence Oke in the hotel. The Times remarked that it was "a brilliant evening at the Central."

W. Thomas Acheson sold the hotel in 1924 to a Mr. Chester Lee after thirty-five years in the hotel. W. T. Acheson died in 1934 at the age of seventy-eight. In 1928 Lee sold the hotel to Edward Lowry having purchased Fitton's store and adding additional rooms over the store. Fitton's was in the old Fanson block. In the 1930's Homer Bagshaw owned the hotel. It eventually came back into the Acheson family who operated the hotel until the 1960's when it was removed after one hundred years of service, by the British Mortgage and Trust Company. Although no legal drinks were served in the hotels of Exeter after May 1, 1915 it was said that a thirsty man could assuage his thirst in the old Central Hotel back room, but naturally that is pure speculation.

So the end of an era came in the 1960's when the wreckers tore the Central down. Only the echoes of conviviality and occasional rowdiness remain to remind us of the days when "Exeter the dry" had up to seven tap rooms in the hotels of the village to provide places of entertainment and amusement for the men of the village.

As we have noted, then, from the earliest times of settlement in Ontario right down to the present day the consumption of spiritous beverages has been a major past time of the populace. Drinking was so common that one student of Upper Canadian history arrived at a consumption figure of something like thirty gallons of whiskey per person per year in the period 1830-1860. This seems like a considerable quantity but the hotels did do a flourishing business and even in a small village like Exeter the ratio of hotels to population would be high. At the time of the maximum number of operating saloons in Exeter the ratio would be of the order of one hotel for every two hundred and fifty men, women and children. And in addition to Exeter's hotels there were inns in Crediton, Khiva, Sarepta, Rodgerville, Brucefield, Elimville, Flanigan's Corners, Adare, Farquhar,Devon, Dashwood, Zurich, Hensall, and in many other places only a few miles from Exeter. Not only did the hotels dispense beer, whiskey and other "fine wet goods" but many stores carried liquor, wine and beer. The best known stores in Exeter to sell spirits over the years included Isaac Carling's store, Maces' Grocery and Liquor Store, F. J. Knight, Herseys Store, Farmer Brothers, Browning's Drug Store and perhaps others. In 1873, by-law No. 2 of the Village of Exeter established licence fees of forty-five dollars for stores to sell liquor in "quantities not less than one quart". The licence fee for a "Tavern, Inn, Alehouse, Bar-house, or other place of Public Entertainment" was thirty-five dollars. Even with all of these available sources illicit stills were set up on farms to produce yet another supply of whiskey.

For decades and decades 'booze' was cheap and plentiful in Ontario; twenty-five cents for a gallon was the common price for whiskey and it was noted that the Sarepta Hotel sold it for nineteen cents a gallon. In 1925 James Sweet was eighty-five years old and in an item in the London Free Press, Sweet recalled how he had been employed to carry whiskey and water to labourers working on improving the London Road. "Whiskey of the best could be procured for twenty-five cents per gallon, and was carried in a pail with a cup attached and every man helped himself. With regard to the harmlessness of the product he named a number of men known to him who lived to be over eighty-five and even over ninety and were never known to do without it." Whiskey and Methodism assuaged the lonely souls and aching backs of Ontario's rural population. Both numbed the hardships of early life in Upper Canada.

Despite the prevalent and widespread use of whiskey, liquor offences did bring heavy fines and sentences. In 1867 in Goderich "convictions made by Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace within the United Counties of Huron and Bruce" were noted in an article appearing in the London Free Press in 1854. Some of the penalties are briefly indicated below:

> "James McCarroll was convicted of selling liquor without a licence and was fined twenty dollars. In the remarks column it was noted that the fine was not paid and McCarroll was sentenced to fifteen days at hard labor. ... Philip Nunn was convicted of acting as a brewer without a licence and fined forty dollars. ... Thomas Smith was convicted of selling liquor without a licence and was fined forty dollars. ... The usual fine after conviction on a charge of being drunk and disorderly was one dollar. But it was a different matter to be drunk on the Sabbath. This cost twelve dollars. ..."

"Charivaris" were other occasions of drunken behaviour. Indeed this rural Ontario custom was declared illegal in Exeter in 1873. By-law No. 13 of that year provided for a fine of one dollar to ten dollars or ten days in the gaol for "taking part in, or aiding or abetting" a charivari. There was a charivari in Exeter in 1902 on

Huron Street that caused considerable number of complaints Special constables were sworn in to restore order. Council was severely criticized, then, for going to the extra expense of hiring special constables The Rev. C. W Brown was particularly angry about the incident As is well known however, the reaction to widespread drinking came to besotted Ontario The Methodist Church was always anti-liquor and made much of people's decisions to give up drinking For example John Carrol writes "And then and there I found the resolute purpose not to touch another glass of ardent spirits, and I received strength to keep my purpose, giving up whiskey, rum, shrub, peppermint, beer and cider . . . I also eschewed the harmless spruce, or root beer In the 1870's the Temperance Lodges and Associations began to flourish The Women's Christian Temperance Union is a relic of this period The other groups, such as the Royal Templars of Temperance (in Exeter it was the Advance Council No 207), The Sons of Temperance, the Huron County Temperance Convention, the United Temperance Association were well represented in Exeter and area The purpose of these groups was "to rescue the perishing, restore the fallen and keep unsullied from the destructive influences of those whose energies are bent in leading astray the youth of our land . . . and to battle against the evils of strong drink"

The general pattern of the lodges was to hold regular business meetings and from time to time hold open public sessions with temperance oratory, readings, and temperance songs It was said that "school teachers were, with few exceptions, active and influential members, leading many of the younger generation into these training schools for good citizenship."

In Exeter the Temperance Lodges enjoyed the support of some of the leading citizens The Exeter Division, Sons of Temperance, in the 1880's included in its list of officers, R Pickard, E Bell, H Harwood, R Crocker, J Gould, Charles Snell, W Shirray, and R Seldon whose title was "Wattin Patriarch". The Royal Templars of Temperance, Advance Council 207 included, as officers, J E Tom, J P Clark, Miss E Graham, I Gregory, R Gidley, R E Pickard, O Guard, W Manning, Miss Bell

These two organizations with, naturally, the help of the clergy who preached regularly on the vice of liquor drinking led Exeter's march to sobriety The Sons of Temperance held monthly penny readings in Fanson's Hall, they held periodic public presentations in Drew's Hall One such public meeting was held in January 1875 when a diminutive (5'4" tall) man with "long, waving ringlets" named Carswell, waxed eloquently for one and one-half hours in the cause of Temperance "The band turned out in full force and played a few appropriate tunes" These Temperance sessions

provided an evening's entertainment. The Royal Templars brought a famous group known as the Temperance Evangelists to the village in 1893. How much actual reduction in drinking the groups achieved is difficult to say but they did provide cheap amusement for many people.

Another antidote to the widespread drunkenness was the 'quick cure'. Advertisements appeared in the 'Times' and the 'Advocate' urging the readers to try C. C. Beer's (M.D.) cure. His advertisements were headed: "DRUNKARD STOP" and was followed by the notation that Beer's had a "harmless cure for intemperance which can be given without the knowledge of the patient, also one for the opium habit". "Tasteless Samaria Prescription" was another miracle cure. This product usually had advertisements which began:

"Her husband was a Drunkard"
"A lady who cures her husband of His
Drinking Habits writes of Her Struggle
to Save Her Home"

Then followed a "Pathetic Letter" explaining how "Tasteless Samaria Prescription" worked a miracle cure and stopped her husband's drinking. Other advertisements drew attention with "She Patiently Bore Her Disgrace" or "Her Father was a Drunkard".

Despite the noble efforts of the churches, the lodges and the "cures" people still got drunk. Indeed, in the summer of 1884 a traveller noted that "Exeter was the worst town in Ontario for loafers and loiterers hanging around the hotels and saloons". Also in that warm summer of 1884 much local interest was shown in what was referred to as:

"The Drunken Frolic of the Sodomites"

> Sodom a small community on the Lake Road had in the 1880's a few houses, and the Stanlake Saw Mill. One warm and pleasant August evening "sweet songs" were heard by the passers by. Some of Stanlake's men had been drinking all day "of course. this was a continuance of their daily habits". As the "whiskey frolic" continued a problem developed. By 9 p.m. the whiskey was all gone and, by God, the nearest whiskey was three miles away, presumably at the Walper Hotel. "The Stanlake brothers not having any extra fast horses were at a loss to know how to secure a fresh supply of whiskey in the quickest possible time". One of the boys, "the fire of craving burning within" made a bet he could run the three miles in fifteen minutes. Prior to his departure an eavesdropper heard the "sweet songs of Sodom" in the night. In a letter to the "Times" this eavesdropper said: "Let me give you a note or two. Sam, Sile ... Sam, Sile, then in a little lower tune, Gillis ... Gillis, more grog, more grog, whiskey all gone".

Shortly after this the runner started out for Exeter, he was half-naked and certainly more than "half-stoned". It is uncertain as to the final result of the run history does not record his time if indeed, he made the distance at all It was however, suggested in the "Times" that in future the Sodomites keep cool and if a "hasty trip is necessary again" that a fast horse be taken rather than start out "a man half-naked." The writer went on to say:

> "Come all ye Sodomites and learn
> from the outcome of that night's frolic
> not to touch, taste, or handle the accursed stuff"

Perhaps the Sodomites did take this advice for the Sodom Temperance League was formed with Silas Stanlake Jr as President

There is humor in such nocturnal adventures as the Sodom Whiskey Frolic but whiskey caused more tragic incidents as well In the 1880's the "Times" reported the following "A man named George M abused his wife and infant in the Hay Swamp and cut Edward H 's head open to the eyebrows with an axe" George was drunk when he did it

The governments of Canada and Ontario could not long resist the pressure of the Temperance movement Over the years Canada and Ontario passed more legislation concerning the liquor traffic than the average layman can sort out No survey of this legislation is possible here but a few illustrations of how Exeter reacted to some of the laws are given

In 1884 and 1885 the great controversy in Huron County and Exeter was over the Dominion Temperance act, more commonly referred to as the Scott Act The columns of the "Times" and the "Reflector" were filled with items opposing and supporting the Act This Act had to be voted in by the County or City jurisdiction The basic clause of the Act was as follows:

> "No Person unless it be for exclusively
> sacramental or medicinal purposes or for
> bone fide use in some art, trade, or manufacture
> shall expose or keep for sale or give
> to any other person any spiritous or intoxicating
> liquor or any mixed liquor capable of being used
> as a beverage and part of which is spiritous or otherwise
> intoxicating "

Under the Act liquor could only be sold by druggists or specially licenced vendors A village like Exeter was permitted only one outlet In Exeter, Dr Browning's Drug Store was the licenced vendor and he could sell only to persons possessing medical certificates

In the local debate J J White of the 'Times' was editorially neutral but the 'Reflector's' editor Mr Moir a former school teacher, "pitted himself tooth and nail against" the act The 'Reflector' supported the Crooks Act which provided for inns, taverns, hotels and houses of entertainment and shops to be licenced under standards set by a Commission Both papers contained numerous articles and letters. The general feeling of the community can be obtained by a few references to these articles, they are certainly too numerous and lengthy to reproduce in full.

Some people felt that the Act was wholly "theoretical and fanciful", that it could not be enforced because "no temperance reform can be permanent till the people themselves resolve to be temperate" Others suggested that "men will get drunk just as long as fermentation continues to be a law of nature" One correspondent suggested that since there was only one drunk for every seven hundred males in the population it was unfair to deprive the other six hundred and ninety-nine of the simple pleasure of enjoying a drink The same writer who signed himself "Moderation" said that people need "a slight stimulus", therefore, a little alcohol was better than having people turn to opium, morphine or chloral which he said women were already doing because it was frowned on if women took a drink

But many others urged that the liquor traffic be destroyed, "drinking liquor is a species of self murder", "liquor is degrading, worse than useless, the greatest curse that ever man has been visited with" "Presbyterian" wrote in August 1884 that "no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven which leaves the only other alternative of his taking up his abode where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth" Reference was made to the liquor "monster", it must be "muzzled on principle of patriotism, Christian expediency" and a knife must be plunged through its heart The liquor traffic must be destroyed forever was the theme of some letters

Bishop Baldwin speaking to the Band of Hope said that "London . . . is giving up young men every day to be eaten by the terrible serpent — DRINK — and sometimes young women too" He went on to say that liquor "encouraged idleness and destroyed the soul" The "man who keeps the rum shop has to face the curse His traffic is the moral ruin of his neighbours . . . his success is the moral degradation and ruin of the neighbourhood" "Protestant" wrote to point out that the Bible, however, provided support for the sale and use of wine, consequently, the Scott Act was contrary to the Divine Law.

It appeared, then, that "liquor was the greatest curse that ever man was visited with" or it was a positive benefit in that it provided a "slight stimulus" for those who needed a lift One's viewpoint determined which of these positions was adopted The writer who remarked that 70% of the people would violate the Scott Act was, of course, the most accurate observer Perhaps the most bizarre comment was made at a meeting in the Drill Hall in October, 1884 when one man who opposed the Act spoke and said "it would retard the noble work of reforming Drunkards"

In any case the vote was held in Huron and the Act was voted in 7,029 to 3,813 In Exeter 262 voted for the Scott Act and 71 against The effective date was May 1, 1885 During the two weeks previous to the date it is recorded that Exeter's liquor dealers did a huge business as the good people of the village stocked in as much liquor as they could afford in preparation for the long drought to come After May 1, 1885 only Dr Browning's Drugstore was lawfully entitled to dispense spirits and then only for clearly stated medicinal purposes

After the Scott Act came into force the people of Exeter and area did not suddenly stop their consumption of spirits and turn solely to sarsparilla and tea Exeter's constables Creech and Gill were kept busy raiding the hotels and private homes Scott Act trials were common as hotelkeepers Hawkshaw, Oke, Brimacombe and others were brought to trial on charges of selling spiritous beverages The frequent results was dismissal of the case since the witnesses swore that their host had served them no intoxicating drinks Convictions were fewer than dismissals In one raid in November, 1886 Constable Creech impounded a bottle of spirits found in one of the stables of one of the hotels The hostler complained bitterly that it was his medicine prescribed for leg pains by one of the veterinarians of the village So people despite the Act continued to drink The defenders of the Scott Act said that certainly,

> "there would be drunks around since the
> liquor dealers deliberately made men
> drunk and sent them into the street
> to show the uselessness of the Act"

Besides it was noted that brandy could be made from wet saw dust and "what chance has prohibition got when a man can go forth with a rip saw and get drunk on a rail fence"

The raids continued in town and out In Hensall Mr B's driving shed was raided and the constables impounded 24 gallons of beer and 10 quarts of whiskey Mr B said it was vinegar so the constables had to, obviously, sample the contents to be sure it was not whiskey It is not recorded whether or not the constables needed assistance home In another raid four constables raided Mr C E's pig pen and upon tearing up the flooring found over 400 gallons of whiskey "The pig pen was inhabited by 8 pigs" The gentleman referred to as C E was himself a county constable and bailiff

Clearly the Scott Act was not satisfactory There was continued pressure for its repeal The Exeter 'Advocate' was strongly in favour of repealing the Act Mr Sanders, the editor, pointed out that

1 The Act was unenforcable
2 It injured respectable hotels and drew men to "low places"
3 It encouraged bad whiskey
4 It was "a tyranny without parallel in British Law"
5 It was anti-Christian
6 "Neither science or scripture says that it is wrong to use liquor if it is not abused"
7 It punishes the seller instead of the drunkard
8 It encouraged a flourishing bootleg trade
9 The Drunkard would be reformed only by other means, not the Scott Act

The pressure for repeal grew and on April 19, 1888 the County voted to repeal the Act by a 1300 majority After three years, then, the Scott Act was out and "The Union Jack was hoisted over all of the hotels" in Exeter "British freedom and justice" had prevailed Huron then came under the Crooks Act This provided for the licensing of hotels and shops In Exeter five hotels — the Central (Acheson), the Exeter North (S L Walper) the Commercial (Hawkshaw) the Mansion House (Brimacombe) and the Metropolitan (Orms) were licensed Two stores were licensed, Farmer Bros and S C Hersey (later bought out by F J Knight). By 1899 the saloon was abolished in Ontario and only hotels could be licensed In Exeter the five hotels and the two stores continued to be licensed although around the turn of the century the Exeter North Hotel became a Temperance House leaving four licensed hotels which continued to operate until about 1915

The Temperance Lodges continued to exist but by the early 1900's only the W C T U , the Huron County Temperance Convention, and the United Temperance Association seemed to exist in Exeter The W C T U not only assaulted the liquor trade but also turned its attention to cigarettes Mrs E J Spackman a local leader of the W C T U in the early 1900's said cigarettes were "heart wreckers" and "brain and soul wreckers" The 'Times' had articles periodically attacking the triple threat — cigarettes, whiskey, and gambling For example, in the February 8, 1900 issue was found

> "Every boy of 12 or over knows that the confirmed cigarette smoker of tender years is on the road to the idiotic asylum or the grave"
>
> "Drink before 20 — by 40 a filthy drunken tramp"
>
> "Gambling leads to utter moral ruin"

The advocate carried in January, 1900 the following item"

> "Those who smoke cigarettes should read and ponder the following David Hurley of Paris, Ontario 19 years old died from the effects of cigarette smoking His father said the boy smoked $5 00 worth of cigarettes a week He had shrivelled up until he looked like an old man His lungs were in bad shape and his blood very thin The physician opened the boy's arm and found that the main artery did not con-

> tain a drop of blood It had all dried up The father requested that the case be made public to serve as a warning to other boys"

The local WCTU cited 3 cases of murder committed by teenagers in Toronto and Hamilton All three of the teenagers smoked Smoking clearly had contributed to their moral decline to the point where they committed murder Cigarettes were legally sold in Exeter only in the hotels at one time They were, however, available in some of the stores One Exeter Old Boy reported that cigarettes "were kept in a drawer under the counter if the store keeper knew the customer well he reached down and sold the cigarettes" In 1901 there was a charge of $50 for a license to sell cigarettes

The WCTU also complained bitterly about spitting on the sidewalks Council in 1903 granted the Ladies use of the reading rooms from whence could come their periodic pronouncements

The hotel keepers in Exeter suffered the final blow in 1915 On May 1, 1915 the Canada Temperance Act came into effect in Huron On April 30 "the Central Hotel Bar closed at six o'clock, that hostelry having sold out its entire stock of liquors" The Commercial was open during the evening and quite a number took advantage of the last opportunity "around the open bar" That was the end of legal drinking in hotels in Exeter The bars never opened again Various laws were passed in Ontario but Huron continued under the Canada Temperance Act In 1921 Ontario voted for the prohibition of intoxicating liquors being imported into Ontario

In the referendum Exeter voted 695 to 136 for prohibition Most of the village's clergy were ecstatic The Rev M J Wilson said, "Thank God, thank God we have laid the foundation for civilizing, Canadianizing and Christianizing the incoming foreigner" The Rev Mr Foote's public statement was intoxicating in its verbosity and length but he concluded with "verily, we have witnessed a great triumph for righteousness" Only the Anglican rector, the Rev Mr Trumper was realistic He said he did not believe in prohibition, that it was unworkable, unnecessary and he felt that the results would be far from satisfactory The Rev W G McAlister, said that the vote would "gladden the patriotic heart of British Canadians" He suggested only "foreigners" would vote against the legislation The Loyal Temperance Legion made up of 63 children gave praise in the Main Street Methodist Church

Temperance people held meetings throughout the 1920's International temperance delegates came to Exeter to view the success of the Temperance movement in Western Ontario W D Sanders, W G Medd, H E Huston, the clergy and others staged a banquet and rally

During this period of absolute prohibition in Ontario in the

early 1920's, W. A. Balkwill was Exeter's Prohibition Constable. On one occasion, Constable Balkwill arrested two men driving a "powerful Paige car" laden with whiskey near Woodham. Balkwill had little trouble since the men were so drunk that they had run the car into a ditch. He impounded over 200 bottles of whiskey. On another occasion a large "eight cylinder Cadillac car" had tire trouble on the Thames road. The occupants were seen to bury some cases in a nearby field. The cases contained whiskey, which was seized but the men escaped. An odd 'case' came to light in 1922 near Dungannon. A burial, supposedly of a corpse from the steamer Greyhound, was about to take place when it was discovered that the coffin was full of whiskey. The undertaker and the minister were totally surprised — so they said.

In the mid 1920's Ontario ended its attempt at prohibition but Exeter remained dry since it was governed by the Canada Temperance Act. The situation was confused in Huron until 1946 when the Privy Council in London, England declared the C.T.A. to be valid in Huron, Perth, Peel and Manitoulin Island. Any liquor licenses in Huron were to be cancelled. There were none in Exeter. S. M. Sanders and the Main Street Church both urged that all liquor licenses be withdrawn. In a letter to the Times-Advocate Sanders said "abolish the beverage room completely and be done with that blight and curse to humanity". He was concerned with the "abhorrent women's beer parlors" and he felt our "brave soldiers" just returned would object to the country tolerating "such dens of vice".

The Huron County Temperance Federation was concerned that booze was being brought into the county by truck. The Federation commented on Seaforth's drinking habits and the "express traffic in liquor" into Exeter and Seaforth. Wingham was "one of the best towns — for drinking" but Clinton was "as clean as possible" but, tut, tut, there was "considerable private drinking". All in all "Huron was the banner Temperance County". The Federation felt that teachers should be "total abstainers". At one point the M.L.A. for Huron, W. G. Medd, expressed the opinion "that persons who have liquor permits should not be given permits to drive automobiles". So Huron had its public expressions of temperance for years.

As a side note it is humorous to note that the W.C.T.U., being ever watchful, had occasion in the 1930's to petition Council against poolrooms. The Village had a by-law against poolrooms but John Taylor operated one and he was taken to court. Later on it was decided that the bylaw was illegal. However, the W.C.T.U. said that "a poolroom is a curse in any town. It is there that the police always go when searching for criminals". "Poolrooms" said the ladies, "are the worst hell holes any town can possess" and they said "it is a well known fact that liquor is often sold in these resorts" Besides "gambling is associated with playing pool" The letter to Council was signed by Bessie H , Myrtle C , and Ella W Fifty and sixty years ago, in order to play pool the "boys" would often skip school and go to Hensall to play

In the 1950's efforts began to have the Canada Temperance Act repealed In 1951 Reeves Cochrane of Exeter and Sills of Seaforth moved in County Council to seek its repeal It was not, however, until 1959 that the vote to decide whether or not to repeal the Act was held There was a good campaign in Exeter with the clergy, the Huron Temperance Federation and Bob Southcott leading the forces favouring the retention of the Canada Temperance Act In print, at least, Don Southcott led the forces favouring repeal "Democracy" said Donald, "permits the freedom to disagree even with the clergy" The temperance forces said that Huron "has a proud record of sobriety" and only the greed of the liquor interests would be served by repealing the Canada Temperance Act But it was apparent that the Act had out lived its usefulness, if it ever had any Elmer Bell took a bottle of liquor to church once to show that nothing could be done about possession and consumption of alcohol any place Huron voted 12,157 to 7,391 for repeal Exeter voted 763 to 480 for repeal

A Brewers' Retail store and an Ontario Liquor Control Board store soon opened in Exeter but still there could be no restoration of hotels or beverage rooms In 1963 Exeter held a liquor vote and the questions were all defeated but in the late 1960's another vote was held and Exeter did vote yes for certain types of outlets

Exeter, then, lost the color which the presence of wet hotels lent to a small community over 50 years ago Exeter has had an ambivalent attitude toward drinking Its citizens probably did not drink any less than citizens of other small towns They did, however, much less public drinking

This chapter has dealt with the hotels and with drinking and other so-called vices As an appendix to the chapter, By-law No one, 1875 of the Village of Exeter is included to illustrate the village fathers' efforts at limiting or controlling 'sin'

1875 By-Law No One 1875

To make provision for the prevention of nuisances and immoralities within the Village of Exeter

The Council of the Corporation of the Village of Exeter enacts as follows

I It shall not be lawful for any person or persons whatever to do any or either of the following on the Sabbath, or Lord's day, subject to the penalty hereinafter imposed

1st To sell or expose for sale, or to purchase, trade, or barter any wares, merchandizes, goods, chattels, or personal property whatsoever

2nd To do worldly labour, business or work, with the exception of works of necessity or charity, conveying travellers and the mails, and selling drugs or medicines

3rd To play at marbles, quoits, cricket, ball, skittles, rackets, or any other noisy game, or to gamble with cards, dice or otherwise

4th To run races on foot or horseback, carriages or vehicles of any kind

5th To dance or play any profane music to the annoyance of any person

II It shall be unlawful for any person or persons on any day, to do any of the following subject to the penalties hereinafter imposed

1st To sell or give away any spirits or intoxicating drinks of any kind to any child or apprentice, servant, idiot, or insane person, without the consent of the parent, master, legal protector or physician of such child or person

2nd To openly expose, or exhibit, in any street, road, highway, or public place, within the said village of Exeter, any indecent object, or openly or indecently to expose his or her person in any street, road, highway or public place within the said village or to put up any indecent placard, writing or picture, or paint, write or inscribe any indecent word or words, or make any indecent picture or pictures on any wall, fence, tree, or building, or sidewalk, or wilfully expose to view in any street, road, highway or public place within the said Village of Exeter, any obscene painting or indecent exhibition

3rd To utter any profane oath or oaths, or any obscene, indecent, blasphemous or grossly insulting language, or to practice any other immorality or indecency in any of the streets, roads, highways or public places within the said village

4th To keep or maintain, or to be an inmate of any bawdy House, for the resort and commerce of lewd or dissolute people, or the practice of fornication, or a house where lewdness, indecencies, or other grossly immoral or scandalous actions are purposly permitted or allowed, or shall knowingly permit or suffer his or her house to be used as a bawdy house, brothel, or house of ill fame

5th For any common prostitute or night walker to walk in any

street, road, highway or other public place within the said village

6th To gamble and win or lose any money, liquor, or any other valuable thing or things, in playing at cards, dice, or other game of chance, in any tavern or public place in the said village, or use any subtle means, craft or device, to deceive or impose upon any of Her Majesties subjects

7th To be found drunk or disorderly in any of the streets, highways, or public places, within the said village, or to wander about and lodge in any house or outhouse, or any deserted or unoccupied building, or in the open air or in tents, or in any cart or wagon, not having any visible means of support, and not giving a satisfactory account of him, her or themselves.

8th To race, or drive furiously any horse or other animal, either by itself, or attached to a carriage or vehicle of any kind on any of the streets, roads, highways, or public places within the said village

9th To drive, ride, or lead, any horse or other beast of burden on any of the sidewalks within the said village

10th To keep or permit to be used in any building or place within the said village, used occupied or controlled by such person, any Faro Bank, Roulette table, or other device for gambling whereon or with which, money, liquor, or any other articles shall be played for and in addition to the penalty hereinafter imposed, the said Faro Bank, Roulette tables, or other device for gambling, shall be seized and destroyed by the Officer, or Constable authorized by the Convicting Justice or Justices.

11th To bathe or indecently expose his or her person, by washing in any water lying or running near any public highway or dwelling house, between the hours of six in the morning and eight o'clock in the evening, unless provided with and clothed in a proper bathing dress, sufficient to prevent any indecent exposure of the person.

12th To keep or harbour any dog or dogs dangerous in their nature to man or beast, or any dog or dogs that shall annoy the neighbourhood by barking, howling, or biting, or shall in any way excite terror or alarm, by running at, barking, biting or snapping at any person or team or beast, passing or repassing the thoroughfares within the said village

13th For the owner or person in charge of any street, to allow or permit the trying or covering of any mare or mares, unless in some enclosed place out of public view

14th To obstruct any of the streets or sidewalks of the said village

of Exeter with any commodity other than building material, or material for the making or repairing of the sidewalks streets, or bridges in the said village, save and except loading or unloading goods and chattels in ordinary trade or commerce

III And be it further enacted, That any person or persons who shall be guilty of any infraction, or breach of any of the provisions of this By-Law, shall on conviction by any one or more of Her Majesties Justices of the Peace, having jurisdiction in the County of Huron, forfeit and pay for each and every such offence a price of not less than one dollar, nor more than twenty dollars, in the discretion of the Justice or Justices convicting, together with the costs of prosecution, and in default of payment thereof at such time as the said Justice or Justices shall direct, the said penalty and costs, shall be collected by distress and sale of the goods and chattels of the offender or offenders, and in case of there not being sufficient distress found out of which the same can be made, such offender or offenders shall be imprisoned in the County Gaol or Common Lock up house with or without hard labour, for such a period not exceeding twenty-one days, as the Justice or Justices convicting shall adjudge, unless such fine and costs shall be sooner paid And in the event of the said fine or penalty being received by the said Justice or Justices, they shall pay the same over to the Treasurer of the Corporation of the Village of Exeter

IV And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for any Constable or Peace Officer, having jurisdiction in the County of Huron, to apprehend any person or persons whom he shall observe committing any offence punishable under this By-Law, who shall be unknown to such Constable or Peace Officer, or who shall refuse to give his name or address, or shall give a false name or address, or one which such Constable or Peace Officer shall have reasonable cause to believe to be false, and to take such offender, or cause him or her to be taken before the nearest Justice of the Peace having jurisdiction in the matter, to be dealt with according to Law

V And be it further enacted that By-Laws No 15-1873 and No 11-1874 be and is hereby repealed, and that this By-Law shall take effect on and after the passing thereof

Passed February 8th, 1875
JM Eacrett
Vill Clerk

George Willis
Reeve

chapter 4

Transportation

"Dobbin remains for man the
very kingpin of his prosperity"

Exeter Times Advocate

"The normal town horse produced between fifteen and
thirty pounds of manure a day with
the average being something like 22 pounds"

"The evidence of the horse was everywhere —
in the piles of manure that littered the streets
attracting swarms of flies and creating stench,
in the iron rings and hitching posts in the
numerous livery stables that gave off a mingled
smell of horse urine and manure, harness oil and hay"

"In early Ontario we find, for the first time in Canada a system of roads being developed almost as soon as settlement began. It was a system which was planned in its broad outlines from the start". In Huron County as well as the rest of the Huron Tract a road system had been planned by the Canada Company. It is true that the roads were not very good when the first settlers moved over them and it is also true that some settlers had to clear a roadway through the bush themselves before reaching their selected site for homesteading. Indeed, roads were not very good for a long time after the early settlers came. Nevertheless, there were roads to the outside world. The Huron Road and the London Road were the two principal arteries coming into Huron.

The south part of Huron County depended entirely on roads for contact with the rest of the province. There were no navigable waterways in South Huron, consequently, land travel was the only means available. Travel was somewhat easier in the winter than at other seasons and it was noted earlier that James Willis and some of the other early settlers had travelled into the region during the winter. The early roads were little more than tracks and were more easily traversed by sleigh in winter than by cart or stage in the other seasons.

The story of the early pioneer road building period and of the problems of early travel is well known and cannot be recounted here. It is enough for our purposes to comment that road construction through the Upper Canadian woods was arduous to say the least. "It was hard, exhausting work. Fever and ague frequently struck, decimating work crews, and deaths were not uncommon". Whiskey was another problem that the road gang supervisors also had to deal with; stories of road crews prostrate from too much whiskey consumption are common. Once the actual clearing had been done the road was still little more than a stump-covered track. It required many years in most areas before the roads were any more than rough trails.

As far as the settlers in the Exeter area were concerned the main road and chief link with the outside world was the London Road. This road had been opened by the Canada Company from London to Goderich in 1832. The road was not logged or stumped for several years but settlers like Willis came up the road almost immediately. As was noted previously, McConnell was assigned to live at the half-way point between Goderich and London and assume responsibility, on behalf of the Canada Company, for supervision of the road between Clandeboye (Flannigan's Corners) and Clinton. This half-way point, of course, eventually became Exeter. The London Road was the Canada Company's second main road into the region, the first being the famous Huron Road from Guelph to Goderich. The Huron Road had been blazed in 1827. Roads like these cost in the area of 265 pounds per mile by the time that they had been logged and stumped. In 1841 control of all but the most important roads was transferred to the district councils by the province. With the passage of the Baldwin Act in 1849 county and township councils were made responsible for roads

The London Road, then, was Exeter's main communications link with the rest of Canada That part of the London Road from London to Elginfield through London Township was known as the Proof Line and had been surveyed in 1824 by Trinity Kilbourne This section of road was purchased by a private road company, perhaps about 1840, and this company known as 'The Proof Line Company' erected three or four toll gates along the road The toll was ten cents at each gate. In 1850 Middlesex County tried to purchase the road but the price was too high Middlesex abolished tolls on all of its roads in 1882 but the Proof Line Company continued to operate until 1907 when the road was finally purchased by the County The section of the London Road in Huron County was significantly improved after it was assumed by the County of Huron although tolls existed on the road in Huron until 1873 There are not many sources of information regarding the tolls in this part of Huron There are indications, however, of a toll gate existing at Devon, the toll keeper at that gate was a Mr Henry Harris who died in Exeter in 1903 Other toll keepers in the area included John Potts, also at Devon, who lived in Exeter in the 1860's and William Taylor who also lived in Exeter The location of the gate kept by the last named man is not known Not much is known about the toll gates in the South Huron area but it is safe to assume that they would not have been any more popular here than they were elsewhere Incidents involving toll keepers were common For example, there is a record of a toll keeper in Bruce County being sent to jail for over-charging Farmers burned another gate near Dungannon In 1873 the County of Huron abolished all tolls in the county and in the same year purchased the Northern Gravel Road Company's road from Goderich to Lucknow, a distance of twenty-two miles This road was the last private road in the county

In the Exeter area road maintenance and construction was the responsibility of the councils of the surrounding townships Township minutes are filled with references to roads and ancillary works One of the earliest such references is found in the minutes of the United Townships of Stephen, Usborne and Hay On December 15, 1842 there is the following entry

> "Received in London from Mr Harris, Treasurer of the London District, a cheque upon the Bank of Upper Canada for the sum of £17 11s 0d for the roads and public works in the Townships of Stephen, Usborne and Hay"

The money was handed over on December 23 by Township Clerk George Snell to William McConnell, the District Councillor On January 9, 1842, the same sum was given by McConnell to Hugh Balkwill the new clerk Presumably after all this movement

the seventeen pounds was eventually used to improve the roads.

Much of the work done on the roads in rural Upper Canada was performed by statute labour. This compulsory work on roads and bridges had been provided for in Upper Canada as early as 1793. In the Highway Act of that year it was mandatory for each man to provide up to twelve days a year labour. A few years later the statute labour requirement was changed and made proportional to the assessed value of the property. This system of statute labour "was devised to meet the requirements of early settlements, when a simultaneous opening of all the roads in a township was the thing most desirable. Its chief advantages were that under its working each ratepayer was permitted to do his share of the road building in his immediate neighbourhood and that he was able to pay his road tax in labour".

It is worth noting one or two details about statute labour in Usborne Township. The items selected are from By-law No. 6, 1854, Township of Usborne.

> "It shall be the duty of each overseer of highways . . . to cause all Statute Labour within his division to be performed between the first day of June and the twenty-fourth of July . . ."
>
> "That any person liable to perform statute labour may compound for such duty, if he or she shall think fit on or before the first Monday in May by paying to the Township Treasurer the sum of 2/6d. for each day . . ."
>
> "Every person liable to perform Statute Labour shall . . . be obliged . . . to work faithfully and diligently . . . and shall bring with him such tools as he . . . be directed by the overseer to bring . . . allowing eight hours to each day's work."
>
> ". . . a day's work of a team and driver shall be reckoned equivalent to two days' personal labour of one man."
>
> ". . . and it shall also be the duty of the overseer to call upon any person of the age of 21 years and upwards . . . to perform 2 days Statute Labour, although his name may not be on the assessment roll . . ."

The by-law went on to provide for a fine of 5 shillings per day for neglect of the statute labour obligation. In 1857 the labour could be commuted for the sum of one dollar per day. It was compulsory for town dwellers to pay the commutation fee. Presumably the residents of the little village of Exeter who lived on the Usborne side would pay James Pickard or Hugh Balkwill, the pathmasters in the area, the commutation fee. Stephen residents would pay their pathmaster. These funds had to be expended by the pathmaster on the roads in his beat. Presumably the few village streets would be maintained by statute labour although it is not clear how the townships handled Exeter's streets in the early years. After the village was incorporated the village council hired men for street work but prior to incorporation street work was the responsibility of the township concerned

The same by-law mentioned above included a section "to prevent horse racing on the public highway" and provided a fine for offenders of 50 shillings There were township regulations regarding the removal of fallen trees from the road, the cutting of timber for twenty-five feet on each side of the road In the latter regulation trees in orchards or "any tree planted expressly for ornament or shelter shall be exempt" There were no directions to the Pathmaster to help him decide whether a tree was an ornament or a nuisance Statute labour was gradually abolished in Ontario with Malden Township in Essex County being the first to end the system Usborne Township abolished Statute labour in the late 1920's

Road work was probably the chief concern of township councils There is little information about the construction of the Lake Road or Thames Road but this road, now Highway 83 was probably built in the 1840's. There is some indication that the Lake Road was opened in 1839 The Exeter area was becoming sufficiently important by 1857 and 1858 for consideration to be given to road improvement to St Marys In January, 1858, agreement was reached between Usborne Township and the County of Huron and Bruce for the expenditure of $20,000 to grade and gravel nine miles "more or less" of road leading from the Village of Exeter to the Head of the Base Line of the Township of Blanshard", this would be at Woodham If the cost exceeded $20,000 the township was to pay the excess The price was to include culverts, toll gates, bridges and other ancillary items The County was to "have full jurisdiction over the said road through Usborne and shall have the power of letting the tolls thereon" The County of Perth was expected to gravel from St Marys to Woodham This road would be the present St Marys road over much of its length, the county directed that the road run straight from the first to the eleventh Concession between lots 10 and 11 The St Marys and Exeter Gravel Road Company and the Gravel Road Company of Blanshard were somehow involved with this construction These were probably joint stock companies such as those that existed all over Upper Canada at this time Such companies were permitted to build roads and to charge for their use Municipalities often held shares in such companies The involvement in this project of the two companies mentioned, however, is not clear

During these years from the early 1830's to the late 1850's the roads were gradually improved from sleigh tracks dotted with stumps, to mud and corduroy roads and finally on the main roads, at least, to gravel At first travel over the early roads in the Exeter area was either by foot, by oxcart or by "jumper" Jumpers were home-made sleighs. The "runners were unshod" and the conveyance was used mainly over grass or rough ground, and, of course, over the snow in winter. Ox carts were used almost exclusively from the early 1830's to the 1850's. James Handford remarked that "some men had from sixty to eighty acres cleared before they bought a wagon". The first team and wagon in the area was owned by the Case family who settled north of Exeter. The teams and wagons replaced the oxen over the next few decades and horses became the principal draught animals. Of course, in the early years, people walked a good deal too. Jim Handford recalled a trip he made to London with his uncle Jack Bissett in the 1840's. They walked to London taking one and one-half days to go. We mentioned earlier how Willis had walked to London. Farmers would commonly walk to the local grist mills carrying sacks of grain.

After settlement had thickened and roads had been sufficiently improved regular stage coach service became possible. Coaches at first were farm wagons with hard seats and no springs, by the 1840's and 1850's the coaches became somewhat more luxurious. Many were "painted in gaudy colours, many had glass windows, curtains, and soft cushioned seats", they carried from nine to sixteen persons. The Concord stage, built in New Hampshire was a famous make of coach at this time. Their speed was varied depending on the road but average speed was eight to ten miles per hour. Horses were changed every fifteen miles at the numerous inns along the roads. The inns of this area like the rest of Upper Canada were often scenes of "wholesale brawling and drinking". South of Exeter there were many inns including Quick's Black Horse Inn and Balkwill's Tavern.

The stage coach provided the Exeter area with its most rapid transportation connection to the outside world. Stage service evolved in the area gradually. The Canada Company provided irregular service over the Huron Road but it was the mid 1840's before regular stage service existed along the Huron Road to Goderich. Regular service on the London Road probably did not exist before the late 1850's although some stage service was provided in the early 1850's. Some of the early drivers included Jack Quick and William Geary. Drivers were romantic figures in those days but often were hard drinking, tough characters. Drunken drivers became "at times a menace to the travelling public". They were paid ten to twelve dollars per month. One traveller in 1856 noted that Exeter was "neatly built up" but travel up the London Road in 1856 was still far from good especially north of Elginfield. The Proof Line to Elginfield was good but the road apparently deteriorated north of that point. The fare to London in the 1850's was fifty cents return "over the most terrible roads, and passengers had frequently to get out and walk", said John Stanlake who in 1924 at the age of eighty reminisced about the early days. The roads gradually improved, however, and so did the coaches. By the 1860's and 1870's there were a number of stage lines operating in the area. For example, out of Lucan were lines run by F. R. Jennings, S. S. Armitage and, of course, the famous Donnellys. Out of Exeter, "Hawkshaw's Stages", advertised as "The Favoline", served the travelling public with "the fastest and most comfortable stages in the province". John Hawkshaw said he offered "good horses, comfortable stages, and the most accommodating drivers". Hawkshaw's chief driver was William Brooks who was killed in an accident in 1875. The description of the accident is given below since in this one incident it is possible to illustrate so many aspects of stage coach travel. The description is from the "Exeter Times".

> "On Friday morning last, Mr. Wm. Brooks ... left Exeter at 4 a.m. the usual hour, having quite a number of passengers ... All went well until nearing London, and going down the hill at Mt. Hope, when Donnelly's opposition stage attempted to pass. Brooks then whipped up his horses, and they sped along at a rapid rate and hurried their driver to destruction. ... The nut of the left fore wheel came off and the iron axle fell to the ground. Brooks was then dashed to the earth, and ... struck the whiffletree while falling."

Dave Johns was on the stage with seven other passengers. He explained that the passengers "tumbled out along the road". The horses were caught by a passer-by and Mr. Cobbledick carried Brooks to the city where three doctors, Hagerty, McKenzie, and Bratton tried to save the "poor man's life". Evidently "the stage which turned and backed several times while at Lucan, had the nuts loosened, and the rapid motion given the wheels, while going down the hill, hurried them off". Once before Brooks had experienced the loss of the wheel nuts when they had been removed maliciously.

This deliberate tampering with the stage coaches was evidently not uncommon. Once in the summer of 1873 Hawkshaw had two stages waiting at the Britannia Hotel (possibly the Royal Hotel) to take people to the Barnum show that was in town. Mr. Hawkshaw had left them there over Sunday night and on Monday morning the wheels came off both stages as they headed towards the grounds where the show was located. Hawkshaw offered one hundred dollars reward for information leading to the arrest of the culprits who had removed the nuts. It could have been a competitor or it may have been some boys simply up to mischief. In 1875 Crawley and Flannigan's London stage was set on fire in front of the Mansion House in Exeter. This was another example of the unscrupulous behaviour of some of the competing lines.

In the early 1870's the stage time from Exeter to London was 4 a.m. with arrival in London at 9 a.m. The coach left London for Exeter at 2 p.m. and reached Exeter at 7 p.m. This was a daily service. There was also a daily stage for Clinton leaving at 5 a.m. and reaching Clinton at 10 a.m., the return stage left at 2:30 p.m. and reached Exeter at 5:30 p.m. The round trip ticket for London was $1.50, the price was the same for Clinton. There was a stage for St. Marys leaving at 6 a.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

The mail was also carried by stage coach with Rattenbury of Clinton being the first to carry the Royal Mail on the London Road from Goderich to London and back. Other mail coaches carried the mail east and west. Some of the drivers on the Exeter to St. Marys run were Ted Davis, and James Shoebottom. Shoebottom was also the proprietor of a tavern. On one occasion Jim Shoebottom was late getting into Woodham. After a time the stage came up to Woodham post office "driverless". Searchers soon found Jim "dazedly wending his way" toward the village.

> "According to his story he had been held up by highwaymen ... the horses he said took fright at the shooting ... Jim claimed he got the better of the bandits after he succeeded in wresting a revolver away from one of them but when asked to produce the gun the best he could show was a pocket flask nearly empty".

It was said that "some were uncharitable enough to blame John Barleycorn for the holdup".

After the opening of the railway in late 1875 the passenger stages and mail stages that had operated the north-south runs along the London Road were obsolete. The railway took over this function but mail, freight, and passengers continued to be hauled by stage and wagon on the east-west roads from Exeter until the coming of the motor vehicle.

Henry Guenther was one of the later stage operators. He met the morning and evening train in Exeter. He charged fifty cents for the stage trip from Exeter to Grand Bend. He also called at the hotels. Guenther's stages ran from Exeter to Dashwood, Grand Bend, Parkhill and so on. Henry died in 1913 leaving his son Earl to run the operation which grew into a large school bus and transport operation. The Guenther transport line with twenty-one trucks amalgamated with the Tuckey line of nine trucks in 1952. Earl Guenther still operates the school bus line known as Exeter Coach Lines. So both Guenther-Tuckey transport and Exeter Coach Lines are direct descendents of Henry Guenther's stage lines.

In 1899 the Dashwood - Exeter stage was run by P. McIsaac who had the mail contract. He also carried passengers and freight. Henry Hoffman also ran a stage from Exeter to Grand Bend in the years before and after World War One. There was some stage service on the London road too. "Cap" Howard operated a stage line between London and Lucan long after the railroad came. Howard

had succeeded "Long John" Hodgins. It would appear, however, that Hawkshaw's line did not run much after 1876 and the coming of the railway.

The railway came to Exeter in late 1875 and so began a new era in the history of the village. The railway, with its rapid movement of large numbers of people and great quantities of freight was the symbol of nineteenth century technological progress. The citizens of Exeter believed in progress which was the style of their times and it was going to be many decades later before voices questioned the whole idea of progress and the value of technological achievements. The black smoke and the wail of the locomotive symbolized the greatness of human achievement in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The first train, a twenty-car freight train, passed through Exeter from London on a Friday morning, December 11, 1875. This was the culmination of work which had begun in 1871, when gentlemen like John Carling, C. P. Smith, G. Birrell, William Glass, Alex Johnston and Isaac Carling formed the London, Huron and Bruce Railway Company to promote construction of a line from London to Wingham. The London, Huron and Bruce Railway Company was incorporated on February 15, 1871 with a capital stock of $104,250. After many difficulties and deals the Directors of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway, in 1874, entered an agreement with the Great Western Railway of Canada. The Great Western would construct and lease the London, Huron and Bruce Railway. The Directors had worked "indefatigably" and had overcome "obstacle on obstacle" to "accomplish this great desideratum". Much of their work had consisted of getting finances. The Government of Ontario was to grant $2,000 per mile but granted a total of $178,630 and each municipality on the line made a grant. London granted $100,000, it was felt that London needed to "obtain intercourse by railway connections with the northern country". Usborne granted $25,000, Stephen $10,000, and Exeter, according to By-law No. 11, July 21, 1873 and a subsequent vote of the people granted $10,000 to the railway. The incorporation of the Village of Exeter was brought about partly, at least, so that another municipality would exist on the line to grant a subsidy to the railroad. Indeed all of the municipalities to be served by the line subsidized the construction to the total extent of $311,500. The Great Western Railway for some time resisted the idea of building the line to Wingham, the Great Western Board wanted to stop at Blyth. There was concern that the London, Huron and Bruce would adversely affect the trade of the Wellington, Grey and Bruce line which already had been built to Wingham. However the Great Western Railway finally agreed to construct the "line of sixty-nine miles, extending from London Junction (Hyde Park), on the main line, in a northerly direction to Wingham, a station on the Wellington, Grey and Bruce Railway" The Great Western Railway was to "receive the municipal bonuses and the Government subsidy granted in aid of its construction" The Great Western Railway shareholders were largely in Britain and the Great Western agent who dealt with the London, Huron and Bruce was a Mr Childers The total cost of construction to the Great Western was "between 160,000 and 170,000 pounds"

Exeter was the most important town on the London, Huron and Bruce Railway and when the Grand Opening was held in London on January 20, 1876 there were more people there from Exeter than from any other municipality on the line Perhaps the large delegation was due to the importance of Exeter Perhaps the Times was right when it remarked "Enterprising Exeter the hustlers for trade" Perhaps it was the free booze, who knows now In any case, when the train which had been dispatched by the Great Western Railway from London to Wingham to pick up the guests, almost fifty of Exeter's leading citizens boarded the train The train left Wingham Tuesday morning and the following description appeared in the Times

> "On Tuesday morning after the arrival of the early train from Kincardine which had on board a number of prominent men of that town, who joined the train at Wingham, the iron bonds were loosed and down, down through the country, over hills and through vales past beautiful farms, swept the speeding train Leaving Belgrave which promises to be an important point we sped on until we reached Blyth Londesboro Clinton Brucefield Kippen Hensall stations were left behind and Exeter reached If ever Exeter's cheeks grew red, it was on that day, for laudatory praises as to its beautiful surroundings, prominence and importance sprang from the lips of nearly all on board The only hindrance to a perfect view of the village from the station is a small piece of woods which intercept the site, but we understand Mr Carling intends removing it Eventually London was reached the trip was made in six hours "

Exeter's delegation is listed since it will provide a review of who some of the prominent men in town were in 1876 The list is as follows

D Johns
J Bell
S Tait
R Davis
M M Rosebrugh
W H Verity
W Case
G Griffith

I Carling
J W Broderick
J Crunnican
J Drew
W Drew
T Fitton
T Coates
W Grigg

A Lewis
R Manning
S Hogarth
G Mace
J McIntyre
J Acheson
J Pickard
R Pickard
C Southcott
G Sanders
S Sanders
Stanley and Jermyn
G Willis
J Oke

A Socks
T Lively
W Hawkshaw
Dr Hyndman
B V Elliott
G Waldren
W Trott
J Treble
W Fanson
J Thorne
C Eacrett
M Eacrett
G Eacrett
A Skinner

These good gentlemen of the village with hundreds of others were welcomed in London "in right royal style" The "choicest of music discoursed by the 7th Battalion Band which indisputably holds as a band, one of the highest positions in Canada" was provided "On the approach of the train a salute was fired ... by Major Peter's Battery of Artillery" London was gaily decorated "Exclamations of surprise and ejaculations of wonder were emitted from the visitors" At 7 o'clock in the evening the banquet began in city hall which was tastefully decorated The caterers, Conklin and Moore had "filled the tables with the choicest that the country could produce" The speeches and the evening went on and on One remarkable feature was the endless number of toasts By way of illustrating who was important, toasts were proposed to the following Queen Victoria, The Prince of Wales, The Princess of Wales, The Army, The Navy, and Volunteers, The Governor-General, The Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, The Parliament of Canada, The Government of Ontario, Thomas Greenway, M P, South Huron, Mr Farrow, M P, North Huron, Thomas Gibson, M P, East Huron By this time the party was becoming noisy and Mr Gibson sang 'The Red White and Blue' But the toasts went on — Mr Bishop MPP, Success to the London, Huron and Bruce Railway, a silent toast to the Dead proposed by John Birrell, Prosperity to the Great Western Railroad, Mr Broughton, General manager of the Great Western Railroad, the municipalities, the guests, the agricultural interests, the Mayor of London The hall was getting so noisy by this time that no one was really listening to the toasts but still more were proposed — the commercial interests, the manufacturing interests, the Press, Huron County, Clandeboye (formerly Ireland and Flannigans Corners) newly named by the railroad in honor of the Earl of Dufferin and so on It is not recorded what the gallonage for the party was but it must have been sub-

stantial with 650 guests drinking steadily throughout the evening. There were about thirty toasts which alone would drain great quantities.

So the railway was well christened in January, 1876, although apparently there had been an earlier celebration in Exeter in late summer or fall of 1875 at the station when the two construction gangs, one from Wingham and the other from London met at Exeter where a gold spike was driven to complete the line.

As mentioned above a freight train made the initial run on December 11, 1875. The passenger service began in January, 1876 and continued until 1956 when the last passenger car was removed. The freight service, however, still exists on the London, Huron and Bruce Railroad to Clinton but for most of the year now the service is a three times a week "road switcher service". In the past there were three trains a day up to Wingham and three trains a day back, so the old London, Huron and Bruce Railroad, now run by the CNR has reduced service very considerably. In 1941 the service was discontinued from Clinton to Wingham. As long ago as 1917 the passenger service was being reduced. The London, Huron and Bruce Railroad had a history of prosperity from 1876 to the turn of the century but since then the story has been one of gradual decline.

In 1875, though, almost everyone regarded the railway as a great boon to increasing industry and business and it was true that places on the railway did acquire an impetus to growth while places that were not on the railway declined. Exeter had a period from 1876 to 1892 of very significant growth. The town doubled in population from about one thousand to a little over two thousand in those sixteen years. It was not entirely due to the railroad but the railroad did contribute. But not quite everyone welcomed the line. The telegraph poles which accompanied the line were cut down near Clandeboye and logs were placed over the tracks in Morris Township. But generally the people of Huron regarded the line as their rapid connection to the rest of the country.

The construction of the line through the village of Exeter occurred in the summer of 1875. Most of the right of way was acquired from Isaac Carling who owned much of the land on the west side of town. This property was known as "Carling's Bush". Mr. Carling undoubtedly profited from the line's construction and he had been one of the promoters. He was personally generous and is supposed to have donated the land to the railway. It is difficult to determine how the right of way through Exeter was decided. Mr. Carling was involved with the railway from the beginning and whether he influenced the decision to go through the west edge of Exeter by his donation of land is not really known but he no doubt did contribute to the decision to go up the edge of the village. In any

case, it has proven over the years a real value to the town to have had the line go through what was for years the edge of the village and not through the centre. Sidings to the plow works and to the Harvey Bros. flour mill were proposed but again the long term benefits have been greater because they were not built than the short run benefit would have been if they had been built.

The Exeter Station on the London, Huron & Bruce Railway. This station was located on the West side of the tracks at this time. This is probably the first station.

The first railway station in Exeter was built west of the tracks and further north than the present station. On the east side were grain storage sheds and storage sheds for peas, from the pea storage sheds the youngsters stole peas for their shooters, "isn't it awful" remarked the Times. The facilities in Exeter erected in 1875 by the Great Western Railway included, then, a station and freight shed of frame construction, 24' x 96' x 12½' in its dimensions. There was a timber platform of 2,176 sq. ft., a bus platform 9' x 15', a passenger platform 207' x 4½'. In addition there was a "closet" 7' x 14' x 8', two stockpens 31' x 39' and 23' x 29'. In 1878 a frame section house 24' x 32' x 12' was constructed. The first station agent was Charles Knight, who was agent until 1900. In 1897 a frame water tank two stories high was erected at the station with a 19,030 imperial gallon capacity, and more stock pens were added. In 1895 a pumphouse had been built to draw water from the river and a well. A new station was built in 1908 on the east side of the tracks. This depot "was one of the handsomest on the line". On October 20, 1911, the new station was burned. "The fire was discovered about two o'clock and the building was a mass of flames at that time, there being no possibility of saving anything. The fire brigade was early on the scene and did good work in saving the surroundings, among which were several cars, two, however, being partially burned – one containing potatoes and the other coal. A gun traveller, who had spent the previous day at the Dashwood shooting match, lost his supplies valued at $500 ... how the fire started is a mystery. There was no fire in the station at the time, and everything indicates that the fire was of incendiary origin". By this time the railway was under the Grand Trunk Railway's control and that company dispatched a car to Exeter for use by the station agent Mr. Knight.

The Present Station

During the construction of the railway employment was provided. The wages paid to construction workers were $1.25 per day; a man with his team earned $3.25 per day. A good deal of entertainment and amusement was given the populace of the village during the period when the railway was still a novelty. The novelty of the railway attracted the townsfolk and the Times was disturbed by the people who "desecrated the Sabbath" by putting a handcar on the track. The Times was more than disturbed, it was outraged. It was perfectly acceptable for people to take a walk, after church mind you, on a Sunday to have a look at the track but to actually put a handcar on the track and run up and down was shocking indeed. The Times said in September, 1875:

> "There can't be much objection raised to lovers of pleasure taking a stroll along the tracks but when handcars are allowed to run upon the tracks on the Sabbath Day we think this is going beyond pleasure and the authorities should put a stop to it. Last Sabbath there were four of these handcars upon the track. There is a law preventing the desecration of the Sabbath".

About the same time, in 1875 two Wingham boys were drown-

ed on a Sunday when their boat capsized. "Let that be a warning to ALL SABBATH BREAKERS," said the Times[1]. The railway meant new business for Exeter as well. The American Express Company opened an office in 1876. A telegraph office was also opened. This was the Great Northwestern Telegraph Company which opened offices in Exeter in 1875. One of the offices was in the north end of town but closed shortly after it opened; the other office was in Sander's store. It was later moved to the Sander's house on Main Street where Mary Sanders was the operator until 1920 when the Great Northwestern Telegraph Company was taken over by the Canadian National Railway. The telegraph office was then moved to the station where it remained until 1936 when N. J. Dore retired. The telegraph business was carried on by Dore in his house at the corner of Victoria and William Streets until 1946. The office was then moved to Centralia where it was maintained until 1966 when the Canadian National Railways' centralization process resulted in the closing of this telegraph office. Telegraph service for Exeter is now provided by the London office. There is some mention of the Montreal Telegraph Company having an office in Exeter in 1871 but the evidence is unclear concerning this office.

The section men and station agent lived in Exeter and the businessmen and farmers could now ship out their goods more readily. In the first year of operation, i.e. 1876, the Station Master in Exeter, Mr. Hayden, reported 9,342,742 pounds of freight forwarded and 4,686,661 pounds received. The station's revenue for freight and passenger service was $24,267.47 with almost $7,000 coming from passenger ticket sales. The London to Wingham time was three hours in 1876.

The line's profit from mid 1875 to January 1, 1876, i.e. the net revenue for the first six months operation was 371 pounds, 11 shillings.

On August 12, 1882 the Grand Trunk Railway and the Great Western Railway merged under the name Grand Trunk. Thus the London, Huron and Bruce Railway became a part of the Grand Trunk Railway system. It would appear that the operation of the London Huron and Bruce after 1882 was not as efficient as it might have been. Complaints about the poor service and late trains appeared in the pages of the Times and the Advocate with increasing frequency. In addition to dissatisfaction with the service, Exeter was never very happy with the location of the station. The feeling was in the village that the station should have been located in the centre of the town. There was frequent talk about constructing a "belt line" into the centre of the village but this of course was never done. In 1919 the Government of Canada acquired the capital stock of the Grand Trunk Railway and in 1923 the Grand

Trunk was amalgamated with the Canadian National Railway system

Over the years there were eight station agents assigned to Exeter. The first agent was Charles Knight who retired in 1899. He was succeeded by his son, John Knight who was transferred to Guelph in 1912. From 1912 to 1936 the agent was Norman J. Dore who had previously been a traveling auditor for the Grand Trunk Railway. Dore was followed by Oliver Martin who was moved to Harriston in 1940. Fred Forrester served until 1946. He was succeeded by Ernest Cerson who operated the station until 1962 when he retired. Cerson was followed by John McKee.

Over the years Exeter was considered to be "a very important station". In the early years a station staff of ten handled the incoming goods and the shipping of large volumes of agricultural products out of the area. We have mentioned elsewhere in the book how heavy the traffic was in agricultural commodities in the early years. By the mid 1930's both passenger and freight traffic began to decline on the line. In 1941 service was discontinued from Clinton to Wingham. In 1955 the train stopped carrying the Royal Mail and in 1956 passenger service was discontinued. The last passenger coach on the "butter and eggs special" was taken off on April 28, 1956. William Wright was the engineer, Les Blake the fireman, and George Love the conductor, for this last passenger run. Rail service on the old line is now very limited. The Exeter station has been closed and the services centralized in London.

Railways, then, were the major form of transportation for goods and people in and out of Exeter for many decades. There was always talk of expanding rail service. For example in 1909 the CPR proposed a line from St. Marys to Exeter, Goderich and Sarnia. The Council expressed interest but the idea gradually died. Great interest was shown in an electrified rail line from Exeter to St. Marys. A radial line from St. Joseph to various points near Exeter was proposed. Various other proposals including electrification of the London, Huron and Bruce were made during the period before World War One but none of the schemes materialized. People like B.W.F. Beavers, R.G. Seldon and the Harvey Bros., were strongly in favour of better rail service for Exeter but the war interfered with the schemes and after the war the additional railways seemed no longer so vital.

With the coming of the railway the stage lines were certainly reduced in number but the horses were not by any means reduced in importance. The horse continued to be the principal source of locomotion for most people for another fifty years and was not really eliminated from the farm and streets until after World War Two

The horse was the basis of a way of life and the basis of a whole economic structure Blacksmiths, veterinarians, harness makers, livery stable operators, dealers depended upon the horse and when the horse ceased to be a major form of transport these businesses disappeared

Exeter had its share of these various businesses based upon the horse We mentioned the stage lines and these continued to operate until the coming of the motor vehicle In addition to the stage lines there were the transport services within the village as well Probably the most well known was the omnibus service of John Andrew Gillespie who, with his son, operated a coach service in town from the 1870's until his death in 1921 He met the trains and carried passengers to the hotels or to their houses At first both the Commercial and the Central Hotels had their own "busses" to meet the trains but Gillespie reached an agreement with Hawkshaw and Acheson and ran a bus for both Mr Gillespie was known to take the occasional drop of elixir and at times this caused him some difficulty One of these times he was taking Mr C V Pickard's grandmother from the station to her residence on John Street (now Asa Penhale's apartment house) He backed his rig into three houses before he let old Mrs Pickard off at the right house Having finally found the right house he tipped his hat and lurched away Mrs Pickard, a staunch Methodist and a strong Temperance advocate, never rode in Mr Gillespie's conveyance again Gillespie acquired a new bus in November, 1903 "comfortably upholstered and up to date in every respect" He also operated a cartage and draying business with his son When he died in 1921 after a long and colorful career on the village streets the Times reported that John Gillespie had finally "relinquished the reins and his spirit took its flight to that unknown world from which no traveller ever returns The trip had no terrors for Mr Gillespie for he was ready" In 1901 A Cottle thought that he might provide some competition for Gillespie Cottle in that year approached Council about the possibility of obtaining a ten year franchise for a street railway from the Mansion House to the Metro House and thence to the station Nothing came of the scheme, however

The livery barns were important businesses in the horse and buggy days The livery man provided stable facilities for travellers, he rented horses and vehicles and generally provided service for the travelling public The hotels all had livery stables of their own or had an agreement with one of the livery operators to serve the hotel The Central Hotel had this latter arrangement W G Bissett had a livery barn and poultry yard at the rear of the Central Hotel and provided the Hotel with stable facilities for the guests Bissett opened his business about 1860 and operated it until 1911 when he sold out to George Crawley Bissett died in 1911 shortly after he sold the livery business He had been in business for over fifty years He had served on council as councillor, reeve, and deputy-reeve for eighteen years Bissett was a "staunch Conservative" and Methodist The Advocate reported in his death notice that he was "impulsive at times, but a warm heart and manly spirit made him a man among men, and no man mingled more freely with all classes of his fellow citizens" He was certainly Exeter's oldest businessman at the time of his death

Ed Christie operated a livery stable and provided the service for the Commercial Hotel William Snell was another liveryman in the village Thornton Baker had a livery barn on James Street across from what is now Russell's store Baker used to drive "commercial travellers" on their rounds to the various stores Salesmen would come in on the train and hire a horse and vehicle to take them around the country Baker took them "around the horn" which was the run from Exeter to Centralia, Crediton, Grand Bend, Zurich, Hensall and back to Exeter Another run was to Farquhar, Elimville, Winchelsea, Kirkton Woodham Baker's old livery barn was sold by Sandy Elliot to L Hodge of Staffa who tore it down in 1943

W J Beers Harness Shop about 1909
This shop stood where the Post Office is now located
Earl Cookson Maurice Quance W J Beer

The harness maker was another tradesman whose livelihood was dependent upon the horse The Eacretts, Charles and George had been one of the early harness makers and saddlers in Exeter William Fanson owned another of the early harness shops in town In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century there were five harness making shops in the village The shops were owned by Mr. John Treble whose location was in the area where the Bank of Montreal is now, Mr. Gilbert House, and R. H. Sweet who sold out his boots, shoes and harness business in 1903 and migrated west. Sweet's shop was located south of Snell's garage on the Main Street. The other harness makers were W. J. Beer and Peter Frayne. W. J. Beer's shop had several locations, it was once located where the Post Office is now and later it was on the site of what is now Russell's store. Beer had learned his trade from Peter Frayne who was an institution on the Main Street for decades. Frayne was born in 1852 in Usborne Township, his parents were Robert and Margaret Frayne. He learned his trade in London and in 1876 he returned to Exeter to open his own shop. The building he occupied later became the P.U.C. building and then was acquired by C. Fairbairn. Peter Frayne married Mary Johnston in 1878 and the couple lived in a lean-to at the rear of the shop until he had saved enough to move to a house on Carling Street. As his business prospered he was able to build the house on Andrew Street later occupied by J. G. Stanbury. For forty-five years, from 1876 to 1921 Frayne opened his shop every day at 7 a.m. He worked from 7 a.m. until well into evening, although on Thursday evenings he closed the shop so that he could attend the prayer meeting at the Methodist Church where he was Recording Steward for thirty years and Superintendent of the Sunday School for seventeen years. Frayne also served on the school board for eighteen years. In 1921 after forty-five years, he sold his business to Maurice Quance who had learned the harness making trade from W. J. Beer having started in Beer's shop in 1904. Quance remained in business on Main Street until about 1940 when he moved his shop to his house on William Street. The harness making shops used hides purchased from McCallum's Tannery for 25¢ a pound until it closed in 1911. After that the hides had to be imported by the harness men. Large western steer hides, up to 8½ feet long, were considered to be the best material and it took 60 pounds of this type of leather to make one set of team harness. It took one man a week to make a set of harness. Beer had six men in his shop so his production was six sets per week. At the turn of the century a set of team harness sold for twenty-eight to thirty dollars. As motor transport gradually replaced the horse the harness makers began to disappear or to go into other fields. W. J. Beer added tire repairs, batteries and appliances to his business. Today the harness maker's trade is an almost extinct craft. Maurice Quance still makes halters and bridles and other small harness items in his basement and is the only harness maker left in the area, and as J. M. Southcott once remarked, "perhaps the only true craftsman left in Exeter".

While the harness maker represents fine craftsmanship it is the

blacksmith that we become most nostalgic about when recalling the days of horses. The blacksmith represents strength and skill. His shop was the centre of much village activity. As we mentioned previously many blacksmith shops were small factories. In the early 1860's the following blacksmiths were active in Exeter: John Baker, Richard Brown, R. Davis, Thomas Elston, William Huskin, John Tancock, Digory Braund and John Trick. Several of these men, such as Elston and Trick were also wagon makers. Exeter lost its last blacksmith in the mid 1950's when Tom Jolly closed his shop, after carrying on a "dwindling business" for some years. Jolly's shop was on the corner of Huron and Main where the Devon building now stands. A blacksmith's shop had stood on that corner for nearly one hundred years.

Perhaps the most well known blacksmith in Exeter was James Stafford Dignan. Dignan was born in Durham County in 1845. In 1848 the family moved to Hay Township settling three and three-quarter miles west of where Hensall would be. In 1858 when James was thirteen he was apprenticed to John Trick "blacksmith and carriage maker" in Exeter. The shop was on Main Street south of Gidley's furniture factory (later Ross and Taylor's). Dignan received thirty dollars for the first year, thirty-five dollars in the second year and forty dollars for the third year. Being an apprentice was difficult, the boys worked long, hard hours for very little pay and it was illegal for an apprentice to decide unilaterally to quit. This was brought home to a lad in Exeter in the 1870's when he was arrested in London by Constable Gill for having left Mr. Fanson's employ before his apprenticeship was up. Dignan, however, finished his apprenticeship with Trick and left Exeter. He had learned how to make shoes and nails and how to shoe horses and oxen. For oxen two small shoes had to be made for each foot. He worked "all over Southern Ontario" for the next fifteen years returning to Exeter in 1874. He bought out John Trick, his former employer and with his brother John, carried on a blacksmithing and woodworking business in Trick's old stand until about 1892 when he bought Richard Davis' shop where the Post Office now stands. In 1898 he bought out Sam Buckingham and moved to Sam's old shop where the Devon building now stands. Buckingham had been in business there since about 1870 in conjunction with Ed Treble's woodworking shop. Buckingham did blacksmithing and Treble made buggies, cutters, sleighs and other items. At this time, charges were ten cents to set a shoe and twenty-five cents for a new shoe. In 1904 prices were increased to twelve and one-half cents to set a shoe and thirty cents for a new shoe.

Dignan continued to do blacksmithing there until 1933 when he finally retired after seventy-five years in the trade. He sold his shop to Hillary Horton. Dignan at that time was the oldest, active smith in Canada. He went to work every day at 7 a.m. and felt guilty if he was late. Indeed, one morning he worked too long in his garden, so he took a side street to his shop rather than let those on Main Street see him going to work at the shockingly late hour of 9 a.m. Dignan died on March 12, 1939 at the age of ninety-four. He had worked hard all his life. He had three sons, two of whom became smiths. Hillary Horton, who took over Dignan's shop, was killed in 1933 shortly after he bought the shop. Horton was hit by a car while riding his bike on Main Street. Horton had previously operated a shop in part of the old Verity works.

Exeter's Last Blacksmith Shop

Richard Davis operated a shop where the post office now stands. There was another shop next door to Browning's drug store in the early years. W. H. Parsons, J. A. Russell, L. McTaggart in Francistown, and Digory Braund also in Francistown were other blacksmiths. Braund's shop burned in August 1901 but it was rebuilt; he was located where Snell's Shell station is now. Francis Blatchford (who died at the age of ninety-four in 1947), Abe Pym, David Russell and Wesley Simmons were other Exeter blacksmiths. David Russell purchased the shop on the south-east corner of Sanders and Main Streets from A. E. Pym in 1909 when Pym migrated west. Russell was evidently one of the town's practical jokers and it was related how he put "Kihoot" on a hog of Bawden's one day. The hog went crazy, knocked Russell over and ran over to Dr. Tennant's. It ran all over that part of Main Street before calming down. He apparently put kihoot on a goat that was in a 24th of May parade. The goat went wild and frightened Mr. Kirk's donkey at the Metropolitan Hotel. Kirk's donkey was pulling a fish cart at the time. The donkey took off for the river scatter-ing fish from the Metropolitan to the bridge. Russell sold out to W. Simmons in 1924. Simmons sold out in 1929 to the Erie Gas Company who put up a gas station on the corner. The company tore the old blacksmith shop down. It had been one of the early brick buildings on Main Street.

There are no blacksmiths left in Exeter now. Jolly was the last. The livery barns and the blacksmith shops were gradually replaced with garages and gas stations and the not unpleasant odors of the blacksmith shop and of horses have been replaced by the noxious fumes of gasoline, diesel fuel and exhaust.

Just as mechanics and garage operators had their lineal ancestors in the smiths and liverymen so do the car dealers have their ancestors in the dealers in horses. Exeter was an important centre in the horse trade. Among the dealers were men such as Messrs. Hawkshaw and Hodgson who bought Clydesdale stallions in the 1870's. Messrs. Hodgson and Oke owned one of the area's top stallions in 1878; known as "Crown Prince" he weighed 1790 pounds. An item in April, 1878 noted that he had started on his rounds on April 11 and would visit Hensall, Staffa, Farquhar, Elimville, McGillivary, Crediton and Devon. Oke and Tom Bissett paid W. Hodgson $3,000 for a stallion called "Bank of England" in the 1870's. Bissett also owned another locally famous stallion "Clear Grit".

Bawden and McDonnell's barns on John Street were an important centre of the horse trade. These men were importers of Clydesdale, Percheron, and Belgian stallions. They bought and sold horses for decades as we mentioned in another section. Stallions were expensive as this example notes — McDonnell and Bawden sold "Darry Down" a Clydesdale stallion to George Coward of Usborne for $2,000 in February, 1900. The horse had been imported from Scotland.

T. E. (Tom) Handford was another important dealer. An item in the Advocate of June 2, 1904 mentioned that Handford paid out $18,000 to $20,000 every month for horses making Exeter "one of the best markets for horses in Ontario". In 1909 Handford shipped 41 carloads of horses out of Exeter to the West. There were 800 horses worth $190 each, thus $162,000 worth of horse flesh. Horse dealers also shipped to the U.S. and in 1893 the Advocate noted with satisfaction that the Americans had reduced the tariff on horses from $30 a head to 20% ad valorem. This would improve the trade in "poor to medium animals".

The Boer War stimulated the horse trade and in 1900 Mr. J. D. Graham paid out $50,000 in the Exeter area for horses. He shipped many carloads from Exeter.

Not all deals were big, however. In 1884 James Creech found a horse wandering loose. He took it to the town keeper who then sold it to Creech for ten cents. Creech then sold it for one dollar. Another "big deal" was noted in the paper in 1877:

> "One of our town merchants who is known as an extreme lover of horse flesh traded to a group of gypsies a number of bones piled up in the shape of a horse, the vertebrae being exceedingly well defined and out of which animation had scarcely fled".
>
> He had given this horse plus $2.50 for another noble specimen. That evening the latter horse broke from its stall. The town keeper picked him up, 75¢ released him and $1.00 buried him in the morning. "The heaves are a bad thing to cure especially when applied by gypsies".

Also missing from the local scene now are the notices advertising the stallions' service routes. Such well-known studs as "Theobald", "Jeffro", "Rosedene Footprint" and "Joe de Cappelle" made their rounds. The last named stallion's route in the spring of 1920 was as follows: "On Monday morning he will leave his own stable and go to Percy Passmore's for noon; thence to Roy Coward's for night. Tuesday to John Duncan's for noon, thence to Hiram Hanna's for night" This pattern continued through Saturday. Joe was allowed to rest on Sunday. The terms were $15 to insure a foal.

A Horse Sale in Exeter — Tom Handford is on extreme right.

The laws governing horses on the streets of the village were the forerunners of modern traffic laws. For example, the speed limit was 7 mph, bells were required on horses pulling sleighs or any vehicle on runners. Without bells, horse-drawn sleighs were so quiet

that there was danger of people being run over. Constables Gill and Creech were kept busy in the winter ordering men to get bells on their horses, stopping children from jumping on sleighs and slowing down fast driving. In the other seasons they were kept busy trying to prevent high speed driving. The Times, in 1887, demanded that "the furious driving on Main Street" be stopped and that the constables prevent this driving at twice the legal limit of 7 mph. The constables also tried to prevent people from tying horses to the shade trees — and thereby killing them. The Constables' duty also included getting people to clean up stables. The Times complained about "unfragrant smells effusing from stables". Despite the laws and the constables there was little that could be done about runaways. Runaways, drunk driving and accidents were common on the village streets. The following items have been selected from the Advocate and Times as characteristic of incidents on Exeter's streets in the days of horses.

On June 16, 1887

> "The residents in the vicinity of the old race course were somewhat startled the other night to notice a man seated in a buggy driving his horse at a furious rate . . . he drove into a kettle of soap, collided with a gang plow, ran into a hay rake . . . he was in a state of intoxication. The episode was a strange one to occur in such a civilized country as this.

In April, 1876

> The Rev. Robert Reynolds, Methodist Minister on the Kippen circuit drove over a rut "at a smart pace" on the London Road. "One of the sulky springs was broken by the jolt, and Mr. Reynolds was suddenly thrown forward from his seat. His heels were resting on the crossbar between the shafts, and his toes under the iron braces at the corners. The suddenness and force of the jolt prevented him from extricating his feet, and he fell with his back across the axle, the back of his head striking the ground, and his arms becoming entangled in the ironwork under the sulky. In this position the unfortunate young man was dragged about three-quarters of a mile, the back of his head bumping against the gravel road."
>
> The horse was finally stopped but by then Reynolds was "in a lifeless condition, his head so mutilated and disfigured that he was almost beyond recognition".

In 1874

> "A team started to run when nearly opposite Mr. Treble's harness shop . . . throwing Mr. Mitchell out upon the road. the hind wheel of the wagon passed over his head."

In 1874

> "A Mrs. Jameson of Blanshard was crossing the street when a passing horse rushed against her and knocked her down."

In December, 1877

> "A young colt owned by George Mace broke away and roared down

Main Street like a hurricane."

On August 23, 1877

"On Monday evening last, three of Exeter North's fair damsels were driving along Main Street nearly opposite the cricket ground. Their horse backed into the ditch, broke the wheels after which the wheels resembled the name of a Russian general that had become acquainted with a Turkish battery."

In 1877

"Galt Reporter" ran away while being aired by Will Hooper — "He went as the wind carrying his rider with him to Cottleville" (Hooper's mocking bird died that same week — poor week for Will.)

On December 11, 1884

"On Thursday afternoon last, after a farmer had unloaded his grain, and driven a short distance his horse took fright at the train and ran from Bobier's storehouse down the railway track, keeping nicely in front of the engine."

In 1884

A cow and a horse got tangled up together when the cow walked down the sidewalk and across which the horse and buggy were standing. A dog started the two animals down the street. The horse and the cow, with the cow in the lead, ran away down the street — the people were "so convulsed with laughter that they were powerless to stop the frantic animals." The buggy was wrecked. It was "a tandem rarely seen."

In May, 1892

A steer got away from John Shute and "for a time was master of Main Street"

In July, 1892

"John Snell was thrown out of his sulky and over the horse's head."

In 1899

"Dr. Browning had his arm broken in a runaway."

In 1898

"While at the depot, George Cudmore's horse was frightened by the train and ran away, coming down town at a rapid rate." Cudmore chased the horse, then jumped on the bus "to obtain rapid transportation to catch the beast" but the bus driver "suddenly whipped up his horses and just as suddenly Mr. Cudmore landed on the back of his head".

In 1895

A team belonging to William Ching of the Lake Road made a "lively runaway along Main Street". They collided with a tree, knocked down an old man, Nathan Carrick, broke the wagon, threw out a boy and some bags of chop and finally stopped near the Metropolitan Hotel.

In 1900

The son of Mr. Cantelon of the Metropolitan Hotel was run over by a

runaway horse.

In 1904

Mr. Dow's team was pulling a heavy sleigh and went into a fierce gallop. They smashed William Dixon's rig and caused one of A. Q. Bobier's little boys to lose control of his horse and cutter.

On June 23, 1904

"The horse attached to Mr. A. Ford's delivery wagon ran away on Main Street yesterday morning and created somewhat of a sensation as it came down the street at breakneck speed colliding with rigs on the wayside amid shouts of 'whoa, whoa'."

In July, 1904

A dray team owned by Fred Gillespie "made a dash for liberty".

In 1914

John Essery's horse ran away on Main Street after being frightened by an automobile.

On May 14, 1931

"A three horse team driven by Mr. Day of the Highway south of Exeter made a wild dash through the village about 7.45 Monday morning and in spite of the early hour attracted the attention of a number of citizens ... the horses became frightened at a ditching machine and started at a mad gallop with Mr. Day hanging on to the reins. It was one of the most spectacular runaways that has been seen on the Main Street for many years with white horses on either side and a dark horse in the centre running at a furious rate."

In 1899

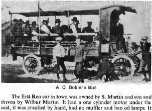
"While two young men, Czar Rollins and Harold Collins, were driving Dr. Rollins' horse to the office, the animal which was high spirited and difficult to control, ran away immediately upon leaving the stable. ... The buggy collided with an old lamp post and lost a wheel. The horse then ... galloped madly down the street ... until it reached the Central Hotel, where a pile of travellers' trunks threw the horse against a large post, knocking the horse down and throwing the boys out of the buggy."

In 1914

"The milk wagon of Mr. E. Hewitt was struck by a train on Friday morning last and the horse and cart were thrown into a ditch."

The automobile made its first appearance in Exeter in July, 1904. F. E. Karn, manager of the Sovereign Bank and W. W. Taman went to Toronto and bought a McLaughlin car made in Oshawa. The car was a steamer with a speed of 10 to 12 mph. The car met with an unfortunate accident on September 4, 1904 when the Conner brothers "had the machine out near Chiselhurst when by some means it caught fire" from the fire box and was burned up totally. Walter Conner was driving but he could find "no friendly pond of water near" to save the vehicle. The reaction of Mr. Karn or Mr. Taman is not recorded. The incident may have discouraged the villagers because it was two years before another motor vehicle was acquired by an Exeter resident This delay occurred despite the notation of the Advocate in 1896 that "the horseless carriage is here to stay Its use may be general before twelve months have elapsed" The comment appeared in connection with an item on a horseless carriage contest in Chicago where carriages propelled by electricity, oil, gas, and air were exhibited In any case, the next vehicle appeared in 1906 when A Q Bobier purchased a 'bus' from Mr Kurtze of St Williams The vehicle was chain driven, weighed two tons and would carry 25 to 30 people or a good quantity of cream and butter Its speed was 15 mph Asa Penhale had the first ride in it but after a short distance the drive chain jumped its socket The vehicle gave so much trouble that people began suggesting that it couldn't run "except downhill"

In 1908 another "motor car" appeared in Exeter when the chauffeur for the late Ed Fowle owner of the car, and a relative of W W Taman came to town A picture in the London Free Press of the 14th of July, 1934 shows Al Hearn, Bob Wilcox, H Beaver, J Hearne, C Spackman, Alfred Taylor, J H Grieve and Hugh Spackman examining the car



A Q Bobier's Bus

The first Reo car in town was owned by S. Martin and son and driven by Wilbur Martin It had a one cylinder motor under the seat, it was cranked by hand, had no muffler and had oil lamps It would seat four By 1914 a number of people owned cars in Exeter including the following J A Stewart, W J Heaman, M M Doyle, Dr Quackenbush, C Zuefle, Charles Snell, Dr Browning, Wes Snell, W Martin, H Ellworthy, Dr Kinsman, Dr Hyndman, T Baker D Hartlieb, Dr McGillicuddy, Dr Sweet, A Cottle, G

Windsor and the Connor Machine Company. Billy Beer and J. M. Southcott owned a Buick on shares and John Parsons owned a car worth $5,000.

"They had quite a time breaking in the auto" remarked J. M. Southcott. "In the early years of the automobile it was a question of whether the horse or the driver of a horse was the most frightened at the approach of a motor driven car that chugged chugged over the road with a loud noise". Horse drawn vehicles had the right of way, if the driver of a horse drawn vehicle held up his hand the motor vehicle had to stop. Nevertheless there were a good many accidents. Wib Martin's Reo once scared a team drawing steel to the Crediton Bridge and the horses went into the river. Wib lost the resulting court action. On another occasion Wib's car frightened a horse pulling a buggy loaded with eggs, the buggy, the lady driving and the eggs were upset all over the road.

C. B. Snell was driving C. Zuefle's car down Main Street when the car failed to respond to Snell's cries of "whoa, whoa". He finally got it stopped but he was only one of many who were slow in adapting to the change from horses to cars. Another accident involving a horse and car occurred at Centralia in 1913. "Tom Carling Jr., had a few moments of excitement at Centralia on Sunday afternoon when his horse became frightened at an automobile, bolted into the ditch, overturning the buggy and throwing him out. Tommy was dragged two or three rods, but was not hurt. In turning into the road again the buggy righted itself and the horse stopped after a short run, no damage being done."

There were many accidents involving cars in the early years. Often they were due to mechanical failures, poor driving, and bad roads. A selection of early accidents illustrates the causes. These selections are from the Advocate and the Times.

In 1913

> 'Sandy Bawden had four axles broken in his car. . . He was taking a load of baseball fans to Clinton when the left back axle broke two miles north of town. The boys were taken to Clinton by Mr. Petty of Hensall. That same week another axle was broken while Mr. Bawden was on his way to London".

In September, 1912

> "Mr. Thornton Baker of Exeter on Thursday evening of last week about 10.30 was nearing Hensall in his auto accompanied by T. Hudson, James O'Neil, F. Huttey and F. Smallacombe of that place when the car struck a stone crossing and jerking the steering gear suddenly caused Mr. Baker to lose control of the machine. . . Mr. O'Neil was pinned under the car and badly crushed . . . the machine received slight damage."

In 1913

> "On Friday morning of last week as Messrs. Frank Durdle and

> William Clayton of the Connor Machine Company were motoring near Winchelsea they met with a serious accident and how they escaped with their lives is a mystery they were travelling along the road when the front wheels of the automobile jumped into the rut and one of the hind wheels struck the grass and commenced to skid and made a complete somersault the top of the auto was smashed to pieces and the windshield and stearing gear broken "

A sad fatality occurred in the late summer of 1914 when Mrs Alex Dow was killed when the auto in which she was riding slewed and capsized into the ditch A "Miss Burridge was driving the car at the time and all had gone well until within about a mile and a half from town when they turned out to pass a milk wagon The auto struck a rut which it followed for a couple of rods and after leaving the rut took to the ditch, capsizing and throwing the occupants out Mrs Dow was thrown against the windshield breaking the glass and landing into the ditch She died almost instantly Miss Burridge and Earl Southcott were thrown clear of the car

People were frequently being run over by cars James Ballantne, Allan Fraser and Tom Yellow were all run over in 1921 Accidents involving automobiles steadily increased as the number of vehicles increased The newspapers carried lengthy reports of accidents but people continued to acquire motor vehicles in ever increasing numbers Laws were introduced and enforced in an effort to crack down on speeders For example in 1926, the London Motor Club complained that the traffic laws in Exeter were being enforced far too rigidly The Motor Club reported, however, that "rigid enforcement of the letter of the law happens only at times in Exeter so the motorist is advised to go through Exeter only on certain days If Exeter wants to turn all traffic in some other direction there is no better way of doing so "

Also in 1926, the village put up the first stop signs in the town These were located at some of the intersections along Main Street Magistrate Hawkshaw cracked down on the speeders but one amusing incident may be recounted Mr Pilon was brought before Magistrate Hawkshaw for driving one of his cars sixty miles an hour at the south end of the village, the magistrate went to Mr Pilon two days later to buy the car

As motor vehicles began to increase in numbers in the village, service stations and garages began to outnumber the blacksmith shops In 1914, for example, Wes Snell opened a Buick sales office on James Street and had the old Pickard building "fitted up to date" as a garage He installed a steel gas tank to service the growing numbers of automobiles Milo Snell sold Ford cars in 1915 His prices were as follows for a touring car $590 00, a runabout $540 00, a town car $840 00 He also sold Fordson tractors In 1921

S J V Cann who operated a bus service to Grand Bend purchased the old Verity building and power house which he used as a gas station, cider mill and turning factory Other early garages and service stations included T H Newell's Gray Dort dealership which he sold to Foote and Pilon C C Pilon later operated the Huron Garage which was located where the Tuckey beverage warehouse is now Pilon had a Chrysler and Plymouth dealership John Taylor had a tire and battery business in the same location S M Sanders and Alex Parsons had a McLaughlin car garage on James Street

Mention has been made of the Guenther-Tuckey Transport business which was formed in 1952 when Ben Tuckey amalgamated his firm which had started in 1929 with Earl Guenther's business which had developed from Henry Guenther's stage line At the time of amalgamation, Guenther had 21 trucks and Tuckey 9

Roads were steadily improved during the past fifty years Number Four highway was paved for the first time in 1920 After the province assumed responsibility for major highways, further improvements occurred Number Four highway, for example, was taken over by the province in 1927 The provincial highways are now among the finest in the world and are not closed for very long periods, even during major blizzards As recently as 1936 Number Four was closed for nearly a week during a bad winter storm In 1971 the highway was partially closed for two or three days, but this is an abnormal condition

The automobile is taken for granted now as a necessity for existence and it is difficult to conceive of the times when the car was a novelty One last note of interest about automobiles Dr Fletcher purchased the last new car sold in Exeter in 1942 and he purchased the first new car sold in Exeter in 1946 There were, of course, no new cars produced during the war years

While space does not permit us to trace the history of the Centralia RCAF station which made the aircraft a common sight in Exeter we will note that the first airplane to visit Exeter occurred on July 8, 1919 This caused "considerable commotion" as the whir of the motor attracted the attention of the villagers "The aviators circled the town and did a number of stunts in the air Finally they landed in a field adjoining the fair grounds Captain Smith a returned aviator was in charge of the machine and Mr Norman Gillies accompanied him The first to have the honor of ascending to the skies in town was Mr J S Harvey Miss Blanche Senior was the second"

A brief word about the provision of telephone service will conclude this chapter on communication "Telephone service first became available in Exeter in 1888 after the erection of a long distance line by the Bell Telephone Company, from London to Clin-

ton through Lucan and Exeter. A small switchboard was installed in Robert Hick's jewellery store on Main Street and the telephone directory for 1889 recorded eleven subscribers:

Acheson, Thomas, Central Hotel, Main Street
Bissett Bros., Hardware, Main Street
Christie Ed., Livery, William Street
Gillespie, J. A., Drayman Carling Street
Elliott and Elliott, Law Office, Main Street
Hawkshaw, F. W., Commercial Hotel, Main Street
Hicks, R., Jeweller, Main Street
Levett and Hutchins, Grain Merchants, Market Square
London, Huron and Bruce Railway Station
Pickard, Jas., General Merchant, Main Street
Verity W. H. and Son, Foundrymen, Station Street

The Exeter Telephone Office 1935
George W. Lawson   Mary (McKaig) Salter   Olive (Lawson) Hicks

Dashwood was connected to Exeter by line in 1891. R. Hicks managed the Exeter Agency until 1905, when Arnold Marchand purchased Hick's jewellery store and took over the management of the Exeter Agency. There were between thirty and forty subscribers at the time. In 1908 Dr. Hyndman organized the Thames Road Telephone Company, in 1909 the Kirkton and Exeter Telephone Company was formed and in 1912 the Hay Township Municipal Telephone System came into existence. All three of these companies connected with the Exeter exchange. In 1912 Exeter's one hundredth telephone was installed.

In 1914 James Lawson bought the business from Marchand and also took over the telephone managership.

In 1926 the Bell Company opened an office one door south of the old office. In 1928 George Lawson who had joined the telephone staff in 1925 assumed the managership. Lawson retired in 1946. During his career he served as night operator as well as a day shift. At that time Exeter had 436 telephones. In 1951 there were 1080 and in 1970, 2020. Dial phones were put into operation in Exeter in 1962.

chapter 5

Amusements and Entertainments

' The last half of the nineteenth century had few of the worries of the last fifty years They were really comfortable years in which to live no wars, no automobile or airplane deaths, no strikes, no singing commercials, no communists, no give me, give me few government returns, few robberies but good music fine hospitality, filled churches real amateur sport, an honest day's work fewer needs a happy people

(R. N Creech 1951)

Undoubtedly Mr Creech was somewhat overly optimistic in his view of the last half of the 1800's Life was not, for most people, as idyllic as he suggests Villages like Exeter had many problems but the townsfolk were generally happy They worked hard, played sports equally as strenuously and developed their own amusements Apart from visiting plays, shows and speakers the villagers depended upon their own devices for entertainment, amusement and recreation This chapter will look at some of these amusements

Lovemaking, the "universal amusement" thrived in Exeter as

it did (and does and will) everywhere else. Instruction in the art received comment in the local paper. The Times carried advice on both kissing and love letter writing. Some advice on kissing from the Times of 1874 is given for those indulging in the practice in 1973.

The science of kissing

> "People will kiss, — not one in a hundred knows how to extract bliss from lovely lips. Take the left hand of the lady in your right one; let your hat go to - any place out of the way; throw your left hand gently over the shoulder of the lady, and let it fall down the right side, towards the belt. Don't be in a hurry, draw her gently, lovingly to your heart. Her head will fall lightly upon your shoulder — and a handsome shoulder strap it makes. Don't be in a hurry! send a little life down your left arm. Her left arm is in your right; let there be an impression to that, not like the grip of a vice, but a gentle clasp full of electricity, thought and respect. Don't be in a hurry. Her hand is carelessly on your shoulder. You are nearly heart to heart. Look down into her half-closed eyes. Gently, yet manfully press her to your bosom. Stand firm. Be brave and don't be in a hurry. Her lips are almost open. Lean forward with your head, not the body. Take good aim: the lips meet, the eyes close, the heart opens, the soul rides the storms, troubles, and trials of this life (don't be in a hurry). Heaven opens before you. No fuss, no noise, no fluttering and squirming like hook impaled worms. Kissing don't hurt, it don't require a brass band to make it legal."
>
> (The Times 1874)

Kissing

> "Of course you must be taller than the lady you kiss. take her right hand in yours, and draw her so gently towards you that you do not derange the economy of her tippet or ruffle — your left arm will find its place without instruction, at the same time the lady will throw her head back and you have nothing to do but lean a little forward, and the thing is done. Don't make a noise about it, as if you were firing percussion caps, don't pounce down upon it like a hungry hawk after an innocent dove — but silently revel in the sweet blissfulness of your opportunity, without ever once smacking your lips, as you would over a bowl of turtle soup, or a glorious appearance of well-roasted duck."
>
> (The Times May 10, 1877)

Aside from the universal amusement and recreation the good villagers of Exeter found various other forms of diversion. Drinking, as we have seen, was a favorite diversion from the earliest days. Ancillary to drinking was, naturally, fighting. A good fight diverted the onlookers and the participants as well. We noted in a previous chapter, for example, how a "gentleman" named MacDonald suffered the loss of his nose when it was bitten off in a "drunken spree" by Bruce Brownlee. Fights between villagers and farmers were not uncommon in the 1870's. The Times noted that

> "a lively fracas occurred in front of the post office. The countrymen

retreated in tolerable good order No serious damage was done"

Fights between the Exeterites and the folk from Francistown were likewise not infrequent and events like this provided diversions until the recent past

Visiting gypsies provided various forms of amusement for the villagers. Fights, fortune telling, horsetrading and other recreation was provided by the gypsies who camped in the groves and woods around Exeter and in "Pickard's Grove" at the river. As late as 1928 gypsies stirred up a minor disturbance. An Usborne farmer claimed a gypsy woman had stolen some of his money while she was telling his fortune. Autos were dispatched in hot pursuit of the "thieves". They were finally apprehended in Zurich by Constables W. J. Bissett and Ed Willis

Work provided amusement as well for the early settlers. An item noted by W. H. Johnston in an article published in the London Free Press in 1938 had to do with the fast cradling that Dick Holman and Dick Handford were famous for in the area

> "One day Dick Holman's brother told an old man about Dick's abili-to do fast cradling. The old man bet the brother that Dick could not cradle an acre of oats in one hour. The bet was accepted and rules made to govern the contest
>
> It was a great event and a large crowd came to see it. The old man came on crutches more than a mile and they appointed him as timekeeper
>
> The two Dicks used the same size of cradles and Dick Handford was given the privilege of whetting the scythes so that Dick Holman would not have to stop. Dick Handford went to the opposite end of the field and had his scythe sharp when Dick Holman came along. This method was continued throughout the contest
>
> Round and round the acre swung the cradler, faster and faster slipped away the time and many were the predictions "He'll never make it." Others said, "Just wait. He'll do it."
>
> He knew what he was doing and kept right on swinging his cradle with ease and precision of clockwork while laying the grain behind him in beautifully arranged swaths or ledges as they were often called
>
> With tireless energy he kept on until when the last cradleful slipped off the fingers the old timekeeper called 57 minutes and 30 seconds
>
> The old man cheerfully paid the bet but declared those were machines not human flesh."

In these early years, every task took on some elements of amusement. Barn raisings are other illustrations of this

In any case, as time went on more sophisticated amusements were developed. A popular entertainment was the weekly paper which not only kept folk informed of the news and social events but also provided another popular feature, the weekly serialized story. These heart-rending romances were the "soap operas" of the nineteenth century. Some women undoubtedly would have trouble containing themselves as they waited for Thursdays to come so that they could follow the adventures of "Rosalie Rathorne" once again. This particular story was a "romance of the heart" which, said the Times, "will bye and bye be termed sensational". It was the story of "a charming, young girl of middle height, the graceful undulations of whose form assure us of its perfect symmetry". Rosalie after her many clandestine meetings with Arthur Gresham finally demanded, "Oh! Oh! I must be proclaimed a wife ere I become a mother!" Such poignant tales as this and others such as "An Egyptian Romance" or "Nina the Nihilist" were printed in Toronto and sent each week to the Times and various other weekly papers.

Every activity was the basis of socializing and entertainment. We noted that the early settlers made their chores somewhat lighter by turning them into social events. Even in the 1870's the Times was still commenting on such pioneer activities as berrying parties. The editor pointed out that "ripe cherries, new potatoes, green apples, and doctor's bills are on the program for the next few days". Even a leap year provided an opportunity for amusement as it induced the formation of a "Bachelors' Protective Association". The executive in 1888 included L. Bissett, H. L. Billings, R. Farmer and the peripatetic Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon. Said the Times: "The girls should boycott any young man whom they have reason to believe has joined this infamous league".

Dancing provided a means to while away the winter evenings. There had been dancing from the days of the earliest settlers and notes about dances were common in the pages of the newspapers. For example, in 1874 the Times noted that

> "the near approach of the season of long evenings and social gatherings is foreshadowed by the falling leaves rustling in shaded streets (and by) the movements of the devotees of Terpsichore".

Dances were held in barns, lodge halls, halls above stores, the Opera House, homes and so on. As time went on dancing academies were established including one set up in 1903 by J. W. Watson in Fanson's Hall. Watson gave instruction in "all the latest dances, including the three steps and Floradora". His academy was conducted in an "orderly and respectable manner". Many Exeterites will still remember the dances in the Dome Rink, at Spruce Grove, the new arena, Grand Bend, the Opera House and many other places. Such renowned bands as "Archie Cunningham and his Royal Marines", "Alan Brown's Orchestra", "Kekoa's 7 piece Hawaiian Orchestra", "McKinney's Chocolate Dandies" and others provided the music in the 1920's and 1930's.

Church picnics, lodge picnics, family picnics, have always been standard recreational activities. Camping and cottaging at Grand

Bend became popular in the late 1880's and has remained a favourite haunt for the local people Soap bubble parties amused the young ladies and gentlemen of Exeter in the 1880's There would be contests with prizes to see who could make the largest bubble or accomplish other similar magnificent achievements Such parties as these and taffy pulls were simply devices and excuses for people to get together for amusement in the days preceding radio, television, films and other forms of entertainment

Birthdays, Easter, Christmas and the other festivals were further opportunities for amusements Some "Jottings by J M S" about Christmas are given below

> "Those were the days when the only means of travel was by train and the London, Huron and Bruce, the butter and egg special did a thriving business There were four trains a day, then, one going north and the other going south in the morning and the same at night The depot was the place to meet your friends, particularly Christmas eve or Christmas morning
>
> On Christmas morning the favourite pastime was meeting old friends at the post office The post office was situated in the south part of what is now Lindenfield's store Mail was sorted Christmas morning and there was the usual anticipation of what the mail would bring The young people home for Christmas found it a convenient meeting place In one corner of the waiting room was a candy counter operated by the Gould sisters
>
> Then, as now, there was the usual speculation as to whether there would be snow and particularly ice for skating on Christmas and New Years as this was the favourite pastime in those days A band was usually present for skating the old year out and the new year in
>
> Across the road from the post office, Mr and Mrs E A Follick ran a bake shop and restaurant in what is now the pool room and social centre If there were ever ardent temperance advocates with Christian principles Mr and Mrs Follick were that couple
>
> We had lived beside the Follicks for years and to the Southcott's it was a second home and the memories we treasure most today are the Christmas morning snacks we used to get at the bakery while they were in business and the Christmas breakfasts enjoyed in their home up until a few years ago with the passing of Mrs Follick
>
> A wood-burning stove provided heat for the bake shop and on Christmas morning Mr Follick would have a glowing fire of coals in front of which he made the golden brown toast upon which he lavished the butter and with jam and coffee we had a wonderful time
>
> When the Follicks retired from business the Christmas morning breakfast was continued in the home and as our family grew they were all included After breakfast there was usually a workshop period followed by a sing song It started the day off on a very happy note But times have changed and only memory lingers"

A choice tid-bit known as Devonshire cream, or more commonly called scald cream was another Christmas treat

> "During the early history of the community, Devonshire cream was often used in place of butter, particularly before the butter churn became an established utensil in the home. A goodly number of town people kept cows which ran at large on the village streets.
>
> For making Devonshire cream, fresh milk was put into shallow pans and allowed to stand until the cream had risen to the top. Then the pan of milk and cream was placed into another pan with water and placed on the stove and very slowly brought to the scalding point. After cooling the scalded cream was then taken off in layers and usually placed in a fancy bowl, ready for the table. The scalded milk was very palatable and would keep sweet longer than the fresh milk."

Christmas parties and concerts in the churches and schools added to the season and as always visiting, eating, and drinking rounded off the season.

Organized amusements and recreation rested generally with the churches, lodges and clubs. Exeter has had quite a number of lodges and clubs. Some of these include the Exeter Sons of England Benevolent society, The Orange Lodge, Masons, Oddfellows, Royal Templars of Temperance, Sons of Temperance, The Grange, Independent Order of Foresters, Knights of Pythias, Ku Klux Klan, Lions, Kinsmen, Beta Sigma Phi, the Legion, Scouts, Guides and so on. The Temperance Lodges were discussed previously. Little is known about the Sons of England except that it was Plymouth Lodge Number 63. N. Dyer-Hurdon, Hugh Spackman, H. L. Billings, W. Andrews were the chief officers.

The Ku Klux Klan had a brief flurry in Exeter in 1926. The Klan of Kanada was organized in Western Ontario in 1925. On Sunday evening, May 23, 1926, forty candidates from Exeter and area were initiated into the order in a ceremony held in the fairgrounds. "Several thousand spectators" were present. "Klansmen from Western Ontario gathered in large numbers." At the ceremony, Knights paraded in their white robes, several were on horseback. Two clergymen delivered addresses outlining the claim that the order was a "Christian organization that stood for the supremacy of the Christian religion, the protection of womanhood, one language, free speech and a free press".

"By the eery light of a flaming cross the initiatory ceremony was performed by the Knight Kleagle". The initiates assembled in the centre of a square made by Klansmen and there they "took the solemn oath". Led by the band, the assembled throng sang several hymns after which "lunch was served at the crystal palace". It is unclear exactly who the local bigots were who felt it was necessary to inaugurate this infamous order in Exeter. Perhaps it is just as well that their names were not recorded.

The Independent Order of Oddfellows Lodge 67 was established in Exeter in 1871. The charter members of the lodge were James

Gilles, Dr. Young Cowan, Alex Lewis, Abraham Sanders, William Rollins, and David Johns. Added immediately to the rolls were Robert Pickard, William Earl and Charles Wilkie. By the end of 1871 Henry Lambrook (cabinet maker), John Greenway (butcher), Isaac Carling (merchant), James Kydd (carriage maker), John McLaughlin (moulder), John A. Hayes (grocer), John Vanstone (watch maker), John Broderick (merchant), John Ross (carpenter), William Bawden (farmer), A. G. Dyer (carpenter), Robert Bissett (tinsmith), and T. A. McConnell (flour and feed), had become lodge members.

Within six years four of the six charter members had been suspended. In addition two of those listed above had withdrawn by the end of 1877. By 1891 the lodge was on the verge of collapse because of the reduced membership and lack of interest. After the turn of the century, however, the lodge began to grow and by 1946 there were 203 members. The present membership is about 240.

The lodge meetings were held in several places in the early years. Mace's Hall, Samwell's Hall, D. Johns' Hall, Senior's Hall were used as meeting places. In 1887 the present building which contains the lodge rooms was erected and the meetings moved to this building shortly after it had been built.

The Masonic order came into existence in Exeter in 1860. The first meeting of Lebanon Forest Lodge No. 133 was held in the Francistown Hotel on May 28, 1860. According to R. N. Creech's historical sketch of the Lodge from which most of this information comes, the meeting was held in Madill's Tavern. Perhaps Madill was the proprietor of this hotel at the time. The charter was received on September 26, 1860. The charter members were: William Diamond, John Dempsey, Hugh Dunseith, Robert Brabson, Patrick Jamieson, John Collingwood, George McLeod, and William Verity. Worshipful Brother William Diamond, was the first Master, Brother John Dempsey, Senior Warden, Brother Hugh Dunseith, Junior Warden, Brother George McLeod, Secretary, Brother Patrick Jamieson, Treasurer, Brother William H. Verity, Senior Deacon, Brother Robert Brabson, Junior Deacon, and Brother John Collingwood, Tyler. The lodge members met "on the first Monday on or before the full moon".

The meeting place changed from time to time. By September, 1860 the lodge met in Robert Bissett's tavern which is described as being on Main Street about 50 yards south of the bridge and on the west side. This information is puzzling since the only tavern in this area was McConnell's and it was supposedly on the east side. Perhaps Bissett's tavern was the old McConnell Inn and the location was, indeed, on the west side. The lodge did not meet long in Bissett's Inn. From February 25, 1861 to June, 1864 the brethren met in William Balkwill's Tavern which was located approximately across from where G. Arthur's service station is now. In June, 1864 the lodge moved back to Bissett's tavern and remained there until 1872. There was much moving during the next few years with the lodge meeting in a variety of places including Mace's Hall (where the IGA is now), Samwell's Hall, Dave John's Hall, the rooms above the Sovereign Bank, Senior's Hall and eventually in the McDonnell, Dickson, Carling Hall.

The Orange Lodge began in Exeter in the early years of the village. It existed in the 1860's and by the 1870's was thriving. Exeter was the scene of many July 12 extravaganzas. For example, on July 12, 1874 there were 7000 people gathered in Exeter for the celebration. Said the Times:

> "The village was most beautifully decorated by the Orangemen of Exeter who had erected four grand arches, one in front of George Willis', Esq., Reeve ... one in front of Mr. Carling's store ... one on Mill Street near Main on the line of march to the grove ... ."

Each of these arches was covered with evergreens, British ensigns, and Union Jacks, "The glorious old flag that's braved for a thousand years the battle and the breeze". There were flags and bunting flying from the houses and stores. The parade was led by the Zurich brass band followed by 1500 Orangemen in procession. The mile-long parade marched from Reeve Willis' up Main Street to Gidley, thence west to William, and south to North Street, east to Main Street and thence to the rear of Samwell and Pickard's store. According to the Times, the temperature reached 100 degrees that day. The Exeter Lodge had been responsible for the arrangements and in 1874 the executive that year included the following officers:

Worshipful Master	Brother C. Willis
Deputy Master	Brother J. Spackman
Treasurer	Brother Lambrook
Secretary	Brother J. White
Committeemen	Brother W. Hawkshaw
	Brother T. Staddon
	Brother J. Pratt
	Brother L. Hardy
	Brother J. Balkwill

By 1886 there were thirty lodges in Huron County. The South Huron Lodge met in Exeter and at the April 1886 meeting the following motion was passed:

> "A resolution was unanimously adopted commending the Government in the noble stand taken by them in carrying out the death sentence on Louis Riel."

The same meeting also "granted the sum of $20.00 to assist

the Rev Brother Chiniquy in carrying out his noble work" Chiniquy, the renegade Catholic priest who eventually joined the Presbyterian Church had lectured in Exeter a few years previously in 1878 in the local Presbyterian Church

On July 12, 1889 it was reported that 15,000 people were in Exeter for the annual observation of the great battle Another great parade was held in Exeter in 1893 The following items are taken from the Times' report of the event

> "The celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of Boyne was right royally celebrated in Exeter with characteristic zeal and interest Early in the morning the lodges of the more immediate neighbourhood together with their farmer friends, who, being possessed of a true feeling of patriotism, left their haying which had well begun, — began to arrive in town in large numbers
>
> At 1 30 o'clock the procession was formed at the Metropolitan Hotel and was fully one and a half miles long the procession as it wound its way along Huron Street to Snell's grove was a bright broad ribbon of rainbow hues
>
> Many of the old time characteristics of an orange parade have been replaced by the introduction of new and more elegant procedure and improved conduct "

The speeches were suitably bigotted for the occasion and cries of "No Popery" filled the air References to the historic battles of Londonderry Erniskillen and the Boyne brought cheers and it was proclaimed that Orangemen would again die "for the Truth" One reverend gentleman brought cheers and shouts when he proudly avowed that he would never shake hands with any treasonist papist

L H Dickson was Worshipful Master of the Exeter lodge No 924 at this time In 1894 the South Huron Lodge heard "several eloquent speeches" and passed a resolution congratulating Sir Mackenzie Bowell "upon his elevation to the Premiership of this grand Dominion" In 1895 the following "amusing incident" was reported The Orangemen had gone to the Presbyterian Church for a service conducted by the Rev Mr Acheson He opened his sermon at eleven o'clock and "after somewhat exhausting his store for the occasion he thought it time to close, but lo! according to the clock he had just preached half an hour" Rev Acheson of course had to continue preaching which he did until the clock said 12 o'clock It was however 1 o'clock and he had preached for two hours The clock was out of order The people "wondered what they had done to be subjected to a two hour sermon"

The century was closed with another grand celebration on July 12, 1899 As usual the streets of the village were "gorgeously decorated" As usual the "brethren" assembled on the recreation grounds The parade was headed by County Master Scarlett mounted on the traditional white horse Suitable references to "Romanism" drew cheers Mr D M Jermyn of Wiarton the Grand Master of Orangeism in Ontario indicated that Orangemen should work at "enlightening Catholics" Jermyn also stoutly defended the liquor dealers who had come under attack from a previous speaker Cheers followed Jermyn's invocation that "all Protestants join hands in keeping down the Catholics or they will rise in their ascendancy again and tyranny will prevail" "The weather was perfect and the dust on the streets well laid" and 5000 Orangemen and their supporters were suitably harangued

Main Street Exeter July 12 about 1930

Orangemen continued to hold their celebrations in Exeter from time to time The Lodge continued to exist in Exeter until recent years The Lodge is defunct in Exeter now and across Ontario it has been reduced in power and influence It is probably safe to suggest that the Lodge in Ontario is a relic of another age and will not emerge as a potent force again

Visiting forms of entertainment brought the outside world to the village On Tuesday, August 28, 1877 the villagers and area farmers looked forward to thrills and excitement from Coleman and Hamilton's great London Sensation and Field Museum The people were not disappointed when the show set up on the cricket grounds featuring the following

Melodramatic Miracles
Theatrical Transformations
Ethereal Groupings
Aerial Evolution
Unearthly affects

Illustrious Living Prodigies
Unsolved enigmas and supernatural puzzles of Europe
Balloon Ascension at 1 o'clock

The show was advertised by a band drawn by eight horses which paraded through the streets At 1 o'clock Mr Gaston "went high into the heavens", his balloon came down about a mile east of town The show featured five "tableux" which were ghost scenes in which "figures floated through the air or remained suspended" Mr Whiston, "humorist" and Madame Etta, "contortionist" also entertained the local folk

Visiting shows and circuses came to Exeter every year Such outfits as Howe's Circus and Wild West Show in which two cowboys were shot "very cleverly" entertained the townsfolk Another feature of the Howe Show saw cowboys shoot peanuts off each others' heads at ten yards

Another show was Lemen Brothers World Monster Show This show listed the following exhibits

Three Ring Circus
Five Continent Menagerie
Roman Hippodrome
The Mighty Bovalapus, "mighty monster of the deep"
Rajah, the largest elephant in captivity
Captain Santiago, high diver
Little Edna, rider
Racing steers
Kittie Kruger, rider
the only Ou-Rang-ou-Tang in Canada
Grand street parade at 10 o'clock

The 8000 people who came were disappointed "The menagerie was poor", "the tents leaked", and none of the advertised performers appeared

Other touring entertainers lecturers, plays and shows provided Exeter's citizens with "professional" or "semi-professional" entertainment Some of it was not very good, some of it was apparently very acceptable The following items simply provide some illustrations of the kinds of visiting entertainers who came to the village in the late 1800's and first part of this century These touring shows would use various halls such as Fanson's Hall, churches, the Opera House and later Leavitt's Theatre

Lecturers came to speak on all manner of topics Chiniquy spoke in Exeter in 1878 as did the "ex-monk from Bulgaria", F G Widows According to the Times, Widows' "main objective was to get money" Miss Evans "The Cambrian oratress" lectured on temperance as did many others Commander Cheyne R N came to Exeter in 1886 sponsored by the Mechanics Institute Cheyne spoke in Drews' Hall (The Opera House) and his subject was "Egypt and the late war" His enlightening address was "illustrated with 65 magnificent lime light views" Admission was 25¢ for adults and 10¢ for children J W Bengough also spoke in Exeter in 1886 Bengough was considered to be "Canada's greatest caricaturist"

Theatrical companies were frequent visitors to the village The usual place for the performances was the Opera House This building stood across from the Town Hall immediately north of the present Fred Darling store Darling tore the building down a few years ago The Opera House building was probably built in the 1870's by the Gidleys It was acquired by Drew in the mid 1880's and he undertook a major renovation in 1886 The seating capacity was variously stated with figures ranging from 700 to 1200 The Opera House building had various owners down through the years and the downstairs section housed various businesses

Travelling theatrical companies presented plays there In 1886 for example the Times drama critic reported on a play entitled "Only a Drunkard's Wife"

> "Frequently the Exeter theatre-going people are deceived by amateur companies, but never we believe have they been made the victims of so detestable a fraud as by the troupe styled "The Hayes Peoples' Theatre Company" in a drama entitled, 'Only a Drunkard's Wife' Shortly after opening the performance being of such a disgusting and clumsy character the more elite of the audience returned to their homes"

Evidently some spectators remained and "kept up a tumult of derision" The Times' report said the group consisted of a lot of lazy people from London doing the towns to gain subsistence for the winter

In January, 1887 Domer's Lyceann Dramatic Company did three plays, "Three Stars", "Divorce", and "Our Boys" In July 1886 the St Marys Opera Company presented the opera "Patience" in the roller rink Said the Times

> "As a rule we don't expect much from amateur clubs and the St Marys club certainly filled the expectation "

The Times kindly requested that the company "not perform again in Exeter"

In June 1887 the Baird Company presented a number of plays to Exeter audiences The offerings included

New Kathleen
Cast Adrift or Father's Curse ("performed in supereminent style")
Uncle Josh the New England Farmer
Nip and Tuck
The Guilded Cage (by Mark Twain)
Betsy Baker and Ben bolt

The advertisements said a "handsome china set" was to be given to the lucky ticket holder. "There will be no deceit practiced; the china will be left in Town." Admission was 20¢ and 10¢.

Other touring players to the Opera House in the 1880's included such celebrated troupes as The Royal Star Dramatic Company. This group it was said "will give the people of Exeter an idea of the perfection to which drama can be brought." F. R. Wren's Uncle Tom's Cabin Company arrived on December 24, 1884 in its own rail car which carried the company of 20 including 8 Jubilee Singers from the "University for the Coloured Race at Memphis". Varey's Grand Moving Panorama showed "War Scenes" and "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" in May, 1884.

Other popular groups in Exeter were "The Alleghanian Bell Ringers", the "Kickapoo Indian Company", the "Diamond Medicine Company", "Swiss Bell Ringers", the "McGibney Family" and many others. Throughout the 1890's the Opera House saw Uncle Tom's Cabin played many times. Also appearing in 1890 was the Hyers Company, a troupe of "coloured folk" whose "singing and dancing is of an infectious character". In 1892 "Harry Hart's Pleasure Party" presented a "snide show" that was "not quite proper". The details of this presentation by 4 men and one woman are obscure, unfortunately. Guy Brothers Minstrels, the Rankin Scottish Concert Company, and Burtches Monster Theatre Company appeared in 1893. The latter group did Uncle Tom's Cabin on August 8, 1893 with "elegant scenery, novel mechanical effects, ferocious bloodhounds, the band, the Magnolia Quartette. The performance was evidently "tiresome to behold".

Florence Washington and W. E. Ramsay presented scenes from School for Scandal in 1893. In 1897 the Opera House saw the most "marvellous invention of the nineteenth century" namely "Cinematographe". For two and one-half hours Exeterites saw scenes from London, England, the Coronation of the Czar of Russia, Boxing, ocean liners, soldiers, cavalry charges and other exciting pictures.

Local talent could also be seen in the Opera House. In January, 1900 N. Dyer-Hurdon and Louis Day organized a "Patriotic Concert" in aid of the Red Cross' work in South Africa. "A crowded house and the receipts should evidence our loyalty to the Empire on this occasion". The sum of $168.30 was raised by the show which included the Exeter band, singing by Myra Pickard and Messrs. Johns, Hicks, Davidson, and Ball as well as by the popular Mac Vincent. The latter gentleman sang "I want to be a soldier" and brought the house down. Judd Davidson presented a violin solo. Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon did Kipling's "Absent Minded Beggar" set to music of his own composition. Principal Boyd "drilled" the boys from the school to conclude the show.

Again in 1903 Exeter's theatre-going folk had the opportunity to see Uncle Tom's Cabin. This time John F. Stowe's company came to town in its own special train. The company set up a "monster tent" which could seat 2500. This performance featured a "Grand Allegorical Transformation Scene, an Optograph, Professor Bullinger's Orchestra and a Pack of Siberian Bloodhounds".

In 1906 the Big Bijou Company spent a week in the Opera House, presenting "The Banker's Daughter", vaudeville acts such as songs and dances by Billy Conlin, impersonations by W. C. Stuart, Ed Stauffer's serio-comic acts, Stuart and Burton's songs and dances, contortionists, acrobats and many others. The door prize, one ton of coal, was won by Frank Taylor.

In July, 1904, Madame Livinski, a Psychic Palmist spent a week at the Commercial Hotel giving her readings for 50¢ and 35¢.

The Prisoner of Zenda was "given in metropolitan completeness" in 1900. About the same time a cast of Exeter actors, including Mac Vincent, T. B. Hooper, Miss Leavitt, N. Cass and R. N. Creech presented the play Finnigan's Fortune.

The Opera House continued to be used for plays, lectures, amateur contests, Chautauqua, dances and other events during the decades following the First Great War. In 1922 Dr. McTavish presented a series of lectures on "A Woman For Sale" and "Dirt, Debt, Doubt, and the Devil". Chautauqua was very popular in the 1920's. The details of a July, 1920 Chautauqua are shown below:

CHAUTAUQUA WEEK
Four glorious days in Exeter

Monday, July 12th

Carveth Wells, Explorer
Lecture with pictures

The Shakespeare Quartette
Classical and popular songs

Tuesday, July 13th

Miss Constance Rowlson
"Canada's Womanhood"

The Jordan Entertainers
Program of attractive features

Pamahasika's Pets
A spectacular entertainment

Wednesday, July 14th

Wagnerian Quartet

Soprano, violin, viola, 'cello, piano

William H Stout, lecturer
instructive, popular

Thursday July 15th

Old Song Singers
Costumed songs of olden times

Dr Robert Norwood of Philadelphia,
well-known Canadian lecturer

On November 14, 1917 the Opera House was the site of the presentation of "The Birth of a Nation" This was billed as "The Most Tremendous Dramatic Spectacle that the brain of man has yet produced" There were 5,000 scenes, 18,000 characters, 3 000 horses The biggest battles of the Civil War were re-enacted "Wonderful artillery duels in which real shells, costing $80.00 apiece were used "

Local drama groups used the Opera House over the years Such groups as the Exeter Amateur Dramatic Club, the Trivitt Memorial Players, The James Street Church Young Peoples' League, the Exeter Choral Society presented works The Goderich Comic Opera Company presented "The Lass of Limerick Town" in 1918, the production was sponsored by the Exeter Patriotic League Also in 1918 the Exeter Dramatic Club presented the play "The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary" Some of the players included Mrs N J Dore, R W Fuke, W S Manson, N J Senior, Miss L I Boyle, "everyone took their parts well," said the Advocate After the Opera House ceased to function local groups used the stage of the school For example, in the 1950's the Exeter Players Guild tried to revive the tradition of local drama

So the old Opera House was the main centre of entertainment in Exeter until the appearance of films and the opening of a motion picture theatre The first reference to the showing of film in Exeter was in 1901 when the Cox Brothers presented "a film" of the funeral procession of Queen Victoria, scenes from the South African War, The Galveston, Texas Disaster and other current events However, the real beginning of film entertainment in Exeter came in 1912 W Leavitt as we noted previously had erected the Dome Rink and it was here that the first films were shown in Exeter on a regular basis Leavitt had come to Exeter from Granton where he was born in 1852 He was one of the area's notable businessmen operating a variety store known as Leavitt's Fair, the Dome Rink and the Grand Bend Park which he had acquired from John Spackman in 1898 In 1914 he converted the former Gould residence on Main Street into the Dome Moving Picture Theatre (located where Rowe's Electric Store is now). In the same year, Enson Bice of Clandeboye had petitioned Council to grant him a licence to open a "movin' picture show". Apparently nothing ever came of Bice's plans but Leavitt's theatre prospered. Among the first films shown in 1914 were the six reels shown on Saturday, August 30. These were: Dash for Liberty, Hannigan's Harem, World Above, Unwritten Chapter, Mary's New Hat, and Janitor's Quiet Life. Admission was 10¢. Other early films included Brewster's Millions, the Call of the North (in five parts with 317 scenes), Enoch Arden and Ten Nights in a Bar Room (A Moral Lesson Never to be Forgotten). The great film stars of the silent movies flickered across the screen of the Dome to the piano music played by Mr. Leavitt's daughter. Douglas Fairbanks Sr., Ken Maynard, Jackie Coogan, Rudolph Valentino, Lon Chaney, Hoot Gibson and Harold Lloyd, Tom Mix, in the Great K and A Train Robbery, W. C. Fields, Will Rodgers, Elmo Lincoln as Tarzan of the Apes entertained the people of Exeter as they did all over North America.

In 1931 "Leavitts New Talking Picture Theatre" was opened. This is now the McKerlie Automotive Building. The new theatre had 357 seats and was "up to date in every way". It was operated by Leavitt and his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Cochrane from 1931 to 1949. In 1949 Mrs. Cochrane sold the theatre to G. D. Thompson of St. Marys. Dwindling audiences forced the closing of the theatre in the late 1950's.

Despite outside entertainers and films Exeter people did provide much of their own entertainment. A most important group in any town was the local band. During the past one hundred years, Exeter has had a band of some kind for most of those years. The traditional marching band has not operated in Exeter in recent years but from time to time the town has had good brass bands. It is difficult to say when a band was first formed in Exeter but it was in existence in the early 1870's. A report in the Times in 1874 reads:

> "The members of the Exeter Band have a rare time peregrinating around from house to house feeding on the best Baltimore oysters. Only a few nights ago they enlivened Exeter North with the beautiful strains of music floating out on the calm evening wind ... and got fed by the gratified listeners."

An item in 1873 referred to a "promenade concert given by the Exeter Brass Band in the drill shed on the evening of the first of July". In 1874 another item reported a "Concert of the Exeter Cornet and Orchestra Band in Drew's Hall". The Times report praised the performance of the band in the highest terms. It seems reasonable to conclude that a well-organized band would take some time to develop, consequently, it may be suggested that the bands must have been formed at least a few years earlier

It is worth noting, just incidentally, that in 1874 a Professor Palmer took up residence in Exeter with the intention of starting a boys' band After the boys had purchased the instruments from the Professor and he had instructed them in the musical arts a "grand concert" would be staged The "Music Man" stayed in Exeter for a time but evidently he did not make much progress in forming a boys' band

During the summers, then, of the 1870's the band marched "up and down the principal streets" playing for the residents Concerts were given in various places In July, 1876 an item in the Times noted that the "Exeter Brass Band" had given another July 1st concert "A few more of these promenade concerts would bring our band more fully into note", said the Times The band would often accompany the firemen as they paraded about the town The band would serenade citizens on special occasions as it did in April, 1888 when the residence of Mr and Mrs Thomas Acheson, newly married, was entertained At that time the band may have been known as the Exeter Fusilier Band During these early years from the late 1860's perhaps to the 1880's the Director was first Sam Gidley and later Edward Treble

In 1890, the band underwent a reorganization By this time Council had taken over the instruments and was providing some financial support for the band's operation It was reported that the Executive included in 1890, W E Gundy, President, Luther Gill, Vice-President, Bert Fuke, Treasurer, and Harry Gidley, Secretary The reorganized group was called "The New Exeter Brass Band" Throughout the 1890's and early years of this century the Band presented concerts in the Town Hall, the Opera House, on the school grounds where a band stand had been erected, in Riverview Park and in Victoria Park Some time during these years Harry Gidley assumed the leadership of the band Harry was following in his uncle's footsteps, Samuel Gidley had led the band in its earliest years Harry led the Exeter Brass Band for many years and also founded and led the Exeter Orchestra "which played many engagements throughout Western Ontario" Harry was himself "an accomplished cornet soloist and the master of many brass instruments and drums" Harry Gidley also managed the Opera House during its later years as a center of theatrical and musical productions Mr and Mrs Gidley lived in the old Gidley house on William Street Harry Gidley died on March 26, 1944, he was the last of the Gidley family to live in Exeter

During the 1890's and the decade before the First War the Band played frequently and evidently it played well For example, in July, 1899 the Band presented "the most high-classed open air concerts that the people of Exeter have ever listened to". The program included the following:

March "Canton Halifax"
Nordica Waltzes
Rocked In The Cradle Of The Deep (trombone solo by Mr. Alfred Davidson)
Soldiers In The Park
The Plunkville Serenade
Comin' Thru' The Rye (clarinet solo by George Eacrett)

The concert included other items as well and was evidently well received.

Another presentation in the 1890's by the band is described below in an item from the Advocate:

> "At 7 o'clock the north and south companies formed into procession at the Town Hall, and headed by the band paraded Main Street. The procession, which was composed of about 68 firemen in uniform, each carrying a torch, presented a nice appearance, and more especially imposing from the fact that the stately form of our worthy townsman, Mr. Richard Farmer, occupied the important position of drum major; and he makes a capital one. He was the subject of much eulogism by the lady portion of the congregation on the street. About 8 o'clock the Opera House was comfortably filled, and at 8:30 the curtain was drawn up and the program opened with an address by the chairman, Dr. Rollins. Mr. R. H. Collins, who sang in an articulate tone of voice, a solo of choice selection, Miss Dodge of London, following in a solo full of tender emotion. The recitations by Wm. Hughes, and the comic songs by Mr. Money were well received, the duet by the Misses Dodge and Barnard of London ... "

Not everyone in town appreciated the efforts of the band in these years. On occasions the concerts were sometimes disturbed by noisy audiences as on the 24th of May, 1890 when a concert featuring "whistling solos by Miss McMannis" was disrupted. The house was described as disorderly. "A pack of toughs could not be subdued, as a result only a small part of the programme was heard". The citizens of Exeter, did, however, respond favourably to the band most of the time. The efforts of such musicians as F. Farncombe, Percy Verity, Tom Oke, Frank Oke and Walter Bawden were appreciated not only at concerts and parades, but also at "private garden parties".

Toward the end of 1902, however, the band was having serious difficulties in maintaining its existence and by mid 1903 the band was defunct. A grant of one hundred dollars from Council helped revive the band. Council did, however, impose the requirement that the band play at least once a week on the streets of the village. Again in 1911 the band was reorganized and flourished for another ten years playing many engagements including the London Fair

About 1920 the band collapsed again and was not revived until about 1933. Ted Walper was a principal force behind the revival, also involved in reviving the band was W D Sanders, J Senior, H O Southcott, E Harness, E Davis, Ed Westcott and Clarke Fisher This new band consisting of forty-two musicians staged a concert in Leavitt's Theatre in April, 1934 As J G Stanbury noted, the audience was "thrilled" with the "excellence" of the band The band operated well throughout the 1930's Ted Walper led the band during most of this time and some of the members were

Coronet - Stan Smith
Allan Penhale
Bill Stanlake
Lloyd Cook
Jack Brintnell
Jim Francis
Alvin Lindenfield

The Exeter Band, about 1913

Clarinet - Bill Geddes
Allan Fraser
Allan Westcott
"Boots" Klumpp
Bass Horn - Harold Whyte
Trombone - Pat Skinner
Ernie Davis
Ed Westcott
Piccolo Harold Elliott

In 1937 the band sponsored the presentation of "Its a Knockout" starring Harold Skinner

The Exeter Band parading return of the militia from camp. This picture would be from about 1905

In 1939 the band was again defunct. It was a great disappointment for Ted Walper and he along with Harold Whyte and Bill Webster made a valiant effort to keep the band going during the 1940's. In the late 1940's the band was fully revived with some help from Council. New uniforms were acquired and a citizens' band committee was formed. The revival was, however, short lived and the band declined a few years later. There have been sporadic attempts by men such as Bruce Cann to revive the band but for the past twenty years or so Exeter has not had a brass band, although there has been a pipe band maintained by the Legion during this time.

So for the best part of the past century, Exeter has had the traditional small town brass band. It provided good recreation for the members and equally good entertainment for the townspeople. The leaders have included Sam Gidley, Ed. Treble, Harry Gidley, Ed. Christie, George Eacrett, Sam Hanna, and Ted Walper. Jack Mallett must hold the distinction of having the longest tenure in the band playing for 65 years under all of the leaders. Mallett was clerk and bartender at the Central Hotel.

Other musical efforts in Exeter included the Huronia Male Choir which has existed on and off for the past forty years. In 1932, for example, it was led by W. R. Goulding. Charlie Godbolt was a member of the group and was often "the hit of the evening with his imitations of Harry Lauder". In the 1940's and 1950's Mrs. H. L. Sturgis directed the group. One of the most ambitious productions was the Pirates of Penzance. Fifteen hundred people saw such locals as Bill Cochrane, Allan Elston, Harold Skinner, and many others perform. The choir has experienced a revival in recent years under Mrs. R. McCaffrey.

Patriotic celebrations were important features of Exeter's life.

33rd Huron Militia Battalion, the Exeter Company

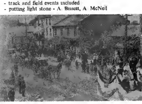
The band prepared for these special days with diligent practice. In the Times of June 28, 1877 it was noted that the band was practicing for the Dominion Day celebrations. Said the Times "They played remarkably well and while out they gave our genial station master a serenade. The fire engines were out the same evening and did themselves credit." In the same issue the editor berated the village merchants. He said, "We hope the businessmen of the town will not be behind those of other places but will celebrate Canada's Natal Day in a truly loyal manner by closing their places of business; let there be no closed front door with back door business about it either. The clerks deserve all the time you can possibly give them ... Our farming friends are most to blame ... For goodness sakes leave your eggs and butter at home when you come in to the races'.

July 1 and May 24 were the two major patriotic festivals of the year. On these days the glories of the empire and of the Canadian part of that empire were celebrated with fervor. Other patriotic days were also recognized such as coronations, jubilees, military victories and in the very early years of Exeter there is some evidence to indicate that Guy Fawkes Day (November 5) was observed. "Remember, remember, the 5th of November" was not, however, a rallying cry in the streets of Exeter for very long.

A few illustrations of these celebrations are given to indicate the activities. One notable 24th of May was in 1886 although it was not any more notable than many other years. The events of 1886 are characteristic of many May 24th celebrations. Two thousand visitors joined the nearly two thousand villagers to view a "Trades and Callithumpian Parade" headed by Reeve Dr. Rollins, and Councillors William Bissett, James Pickard, Johns and Hoskins, clerk M. Eacrett and Treasurer George Eacrett. Parade Marshal Castor Willis had placed these leaders of the village in an elegant covered carriage. The band, directed by Sam Gidley and led by George Bawden's dog "proudly wearing a blanket bearing the name on either side" provided stirring march music. The parade included the following: the two fire companies in full uniform, dry goods floats (Pickard and Carling) grocers floats (Farmer Bros., James Ferguson) travelling stores (Dearing and Sanders), bakers (Bell and Rossenberger), butcher (R. Davis), cooper shop (J. Gould), harness, boots, shoes, (C. Eacrett), carriage factory (J. Mattice), self binder (R. Lang). John Vail on roller skates represented the roller rink. Bringing up the rear of the parade were two mules pulling the skating rink wagon, a performing bear and a wagon load of small girls "in white" singing 'God Save The Queen'.

In the afternoon the crowds moved to the fairgrounds to watch the various activities. The band played as the games went on. Some of the games and contests are noted below:

- a 300 yard hose reel race between the two companies was won by Reliance Co. No. 1 in 59 seconds
- the bicycle race was won by F. Hess of Zurich with runners up being James Ramsay, and William Gundy.
- Captain McGuires' team won the tug-of-war.
- The "greasy hog" was caught by Joseph Bawden
- boat races on 'Pickard's Pond' were won by George Vosper and N. Dyer-Hurdon. Canoe races were won by E. Snell and Bob Sanders
- track and field events included
- putting light stone - A. Bissett, A. McNeil



Exeter's celebration of General Buller's Relief of Ladysmith
March 8, 1908

putting heavy stone - A. Bissett, A. McNeil
hurdle race - E. Hodgins, R. Eacrett
fat men's race - T. B. Carling, A. Bissett
100 yard race (amateurs) for a silver cup presented by T. Fitton - E. Hodgins
boys' races - T. Tyndall, A. McCallum, E. Gidley
one-half mile race - J. McFadden, E. L. Braund
hop, step and jump - E. Hodgins and R. Eacrett
running long jump - E. Hodgins and R. Eacrett
standing long jump - W. A. McLean, E. Hodgins
100 yard race (open) - W. A. McLean, R. Eacrett

In the evening a skating carnival was held in the Dominion Roller Rink. In the races J. Vail won and as a result of this third win Vail kept the trophy. A. Stanlake, Mary Sanders, and Ida Gould were among the winners of prizes for costumes. In charge of the day was none other than Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon. It was a fine day with the only disagreeable element being the dusty roads.

On May 24, 1888 five thousand came to Exeter for the celebrations which followed much the same pattern as the day described above. Tom Oke was the champion racer of the day. A few drunks added a minor discordant note.

In other years lacrosse matches were included as in 1896 when St. Marys and Exeter played with St. Marys winning. In that year five teams also competed in a football tournament, Bicycle races were also a feature of the day.

Early in the century, the 24th of May celebrations received impetus from the South African War. In 1901 Exeter's celebrations began at 9 o'clock with a sham battle depicting the fight at Paardeberg and the surrender of Cronge to Lord Roberts. Then followed a grand military parade depicting the entry of Lord Roberts into Bloemfontein and also celebrating the relief of Mafeking. The 33rd Huron regiment, the school cadets "with guns" and the Exeter band were included in the parade. Following the military activities were horse races and a lacrosse game.

In speaking of the South Africa War it is worth noting that in February, 1900 news came of the relief of Ladysmith. Exeter's "citizens were in a high state of jubilation" Flags appeared all over Exeter, the bells in Trivitt Church were rung, guns were fired but it was afterwards learned that the report was erroneous. Premature celebrations occurred in various places. One report reads as follows and is given because it helps convey the feelings of English Canadians as they were then.

> "Quite a demonstration was held in our school on Friday last, when our teacher Miss A. McGregor heard of the relief of Ladysmith. She tolled the bell for fifteen minutes and had the children give three

> cheers for Queen Victoria, General Buller, Gen. White, the British Army and our brave Canadian boys. Miss McGregor is a true British subject as well as a first-class teacher and we feel sure that had she been a man she would now be at the front along with the rest of our brave boys facing the Boers, but as it is we know her heart is with them."

Exeter again celebrated the relief of Ladysmith at the appropriate time in May.

Below is the Times' report of Exeter's celebration:

> "That the good news of the relief of Ladysmith on Thursday last was received with great rejoicing in Exeter goes without saying. Never was there a more enthusiastic outburst of loyalty and patriotism manifested in the history of the town. As soon as the news was announced, crowds began to amass, flags were hoisted, bunting stretched, the church bells set ringing, the fire alarm sounded and the whole town went wild with joy. A half holiday was proclaimed by the Reeve and the school was dismissed. At about three o'clock in the afternoon a grand procession was formed in front of the Town Hall and paraded Main Street. The procession was made up of men on horseback, among whom was a striking character of a typical representative of John Bull, in the person of our much esteemed citizen, Mr. Robert Leathorn, who sat on his charger with the grace and elegance of a Duke, and who added much to the tone of the concourse, a rig containing Dr. Rollins, Warden of the County, Reeve Bissett, and Councillors Muir, Evans, Levitt and Armstrong, the Exeter Band, about thirty volunteers with Mr. Geo. Harness in command, a boys' brigade, hauling with them a miniature cannon, the Firemen and an immense crowd of citizens. After marching up Main Street as far as the Metropolitan Hotel, the band played several appropriate airs, the procession returned, marching down to Huron Street thence back to the Town Hall where the parade halted and the volunteers acquitted themselves excellently in a military drill, after which several volleys were fired, including several rounds from the miniature cannon. The boys then sang very beautifully "Soldiers of the Queen" and the whole crowd "God Save The Queen" followed by three lusty cheers for "Bobs", Buller, Kitchener, White and the Canadians, after which the crowd dispersed. In the evening the jubilation was continued. A large procession was again formed and marched up and down Main Street with the effigy of Cronje, after which a large bonfire was started on the vacant lot opposite the Central Hotel, with the effigy of Cronje surmounting the whole. Fire-arms and fireworks were discharged in profusion and the whole town was wild with excitement."

In May, 1900, N. Dyer-Hurdon wrote to General Sir Redvers Buller to congratulate him on his magnificent performance in relieving Ladysmith. Dyer-Hurdon explained to General Buller that Exeter was composed of Devon men and was, therefore, doubly proud of another Devon hero. Mr. Dyer-Hurdon had attended Crediton Grammar School when "Squire" Buller, the

General's father had been president of the school board.

In December 1900 Dyer-Hurdon received a reply from General Buller. In his letter the General noted that in 1864 he had been quartered in London, Ontario and had driven "Over one day to both Crediton and Exeter in order to write home from both those addresses" Mr Dyer-Hurdon said he would keep General Buller's letter for the rest of his life. In 1901 the Times received a letter from Exeter, Devon indicating that donations for a Buller Memorial were being accepted from all parts of the empire. About the same time the firemen sponsored a visit to Exeter by Stanley M. Brown 'The Mail and Empire' war correspondent who had gone to South Africa with the Canadian contingent, his lecture was entitled "To Africa With The Canadians"

One other May 24 celebration that drew five thousand visitors was in 1887 "The wind blew and the rain descended in torrents" but the parade went on and is described as follows

> "It formed at the North end Fire Hall, marshalled by C. Willis and Jas. Weekes, marched the principal streets in the following order - Band followed by a jubilee car containing a representative of the Queen and representatives of the seven provinces of the Dominion, all attired in suitable costumes with a guard of honour composed of twelve soldiers, under the command of Lieut. Dr. H. K. Hyndman, assisted by Sergt. A. Robinson. Firemen - two companies - in uniform, Aldermen in carriages, a carriage containing about twenty small girls all dressed in white and singing at intervals, 'God Save The Queen', and "The Red White And Blue" Then followed the different trades, the Indian warriors, in their native dress, and the pioneer, with his log hut upon an old wagon, drawn by a yoke of oxen. With the exception of the jubilee car which was really magnificent, the pioneer's

Sam Sweet's prize-winning entry in the May 24, 1887 parade

> outfit, was most unique The old man with rifle in hand, the old lady busy at her knitting, while inside the shanty the music of the fiddle was heard, the stag horns on the roof, the coon skins on the sides, with the teamster and cattle and the tattered garments of the whole, all combined gave it a primitive appearance Much credit is due to Mr Samuel Sweet for the genius displayed in the design of the scene presented by the settler's hut Just before the dismissal at the market for dinner, three cheers were given for the natives of the soil - the Indians, the city fathers pioneers, and the Queen, after which the band played God Save The Queen, and the children sang the same"

The other events were much the same as in other years with sports, and a band concert

In 1897 Victoria's Jubilee was celebrated across the empire An item in the Times of April 29, 1897 reads as follows

> "The National Anthem will be sung and prayers offered for the Queen on Sunday, June 20 throughout all the colonies of the Empire ' God Save The Queen" is to be sung continuously by the Sons of England throughout the Colonial Empire starting in the Fiji Islands and following the sun around the world the anthem to be rendered in each place as the sun passes it"

In Exeter N Dyer-Hurdon organized an afternoon of games for the children and an evening of fireworks Later on Exeter's citizens witnessed "moving photographs" of the Queen's Jubilee procession "as it actually occurred"

Dominion Day in Exeter seldom reached the levels of patriotic fervor that the Queen's Birthday evoked The day was usually observed by a major race meet and sports Until 1892 the races were held in the old driving park In 1892 the twenty-fifth anniversary of Confederation was celebrated with the opening of the new driving park There was also a football game and bicycle races "The Exeter Brass Band supplied music for the occasion and everything passed off pleasantly" In 1927 the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation was observed in Exeter with a parade, a patriotic program and an historical pageant In 1954, six thousand people were in Exeter for a parade, alligator wrestling and other such suitable activities for Dominion Day

Coronations were also suitably observed in town George V's coronation was celebrated with bonfires and fireworks at the river under Dyer-Hurdon's direction The coronation of George VI was observed with a service at the school which included the planting of two acorns that had been sent from Windsor Forest A religious service in Trivitt Church followed

Over the years, then, patriotic celebrations observed the Queen's Birthday most fervently Only minor vestiges of the 24th of May celebrations now remain Sports and race meets usually commemorated Dominion Day

The town's parks were usually the scenes of these celebrations as we noted. The fairgrounds and race track area was first used in 1892 as a race track and has become the major sports field. Riverview Park was opened in 1913 as a result of the local Women's Institute obtaining Council's permission to plant trees and beautify the grounds which had been used for pasture up to that time. The village had purchased the land in 1908 from James Howard. At that time there were trees along the south and west sides and along the river. For the opening of the park the grounds were "beautifully decorated with Chinese lanterns and bunting". The band, under Ed Treble's direction, played and Mrs. Hastings of the Women's Institute christened the park as 'Riverview Park'. That night "a large bonfire was made followed by a display of fireworks including paper balloon ascensions and also 'The Storming Of The Fort'. Dyer-Hurdon had arranged for this sham battle to be fought on the opposite side of the river. The boys in the two "armies" used roman candles. Since 1913 the park area has undergone enlargement and improvement so that it is now one of the town's beauty spots. Various groups deserve credit for the present existence of the park. The Women's Institute and the Exeter Horticultural Society, from the early years, together established the original park area, planted trees, and landscaped the area, erected the pillars on Hill Street, built the barbecue and also arranged for some dredging of the pond for swimming. The improvements to the park were not made without opposition. In 1921 the Horticultural Society was criticized for wasting money on the area. It was a dark, dangerous place according to one of the Times' correspondents. The group, headed by Mr. Buswell, that persuaded the Council not to give the park land for use as a hospital site also deserves credit. In recent decades the Town added to the park land on both sides of the river. Major improvements have been made along the river from the bridge east to the limits of the park. A swimming pool has also been added to the area. Eventually the land known in the past as the "River Commons" west of the Main Street will no doubt become additional park land, as well as the lands lying between Riverview Park and the Morrison Dam area.

Victoria Park was originally designated as a market square but it was seldom used for this purpose and the land was used largely as pasture until the 1880's when some of the villagers decided to beautify the area. The land seems to have been donated to the village about 1885 by Joseph Acheson and Isaac Carling. Dr. Lutz, Robert Sanders, Wm. Creech and others planted the trees. It evidently deteriorated again until about 1897 or 1898 when the village again made an effort to improve the area by further tree planting and the erection of a bandstand. It has been maintained by

the town as a park more or less continuously since the turn of the century although cows grazed there off and on over the years. A wading pool was added in recent decades and the large trees enhance that part of Exeter.

Federal Park, the area on Main Street now occupied by the Post Office, was the open space left when the government purchased the site for the Post Office but then failed to erect a building for many years as we noted previously. The Horticultural Society planted shrubs, trees and flowers including many zinnias. The zinnia is Exeter's civic flower.

The Horticultural Society, incidentally, came into existence in 1922 as a result of the efforts of Reeve B. W. F. Beavers, J. S. Harvey, who became the first President of the Society, J. G. Stanbury, the first Secretary, G. S. Howard, and S. J. Hogarth. The first Vice-President was Jean Murray. Honorary Presidents named in 1922 were Dr. Hyndman and Isaac Carling. It was the Horticultural Society that selected the Giant Zinnia as Exeter's flower. This group of public-spirited citizens not only worked on Riverview Park, Federal Park, the Community Centres Park and Victoria Park, but also improved the grounds around the Library and Town Hall. At the rear of the Town Hall where the weigh scales were located, cattle created a mess. Garbage littered the area. In the 1920's the Society cleaned up these public areas, planted shrubs, flowers and trees and provided benches in front of the Library. A garden was developed just west of the old public school; the plants were all identified with a marker. Trees were provided free to those citizens who wished to plant them. Flower shows were held and the Society did everything possible to encourage civic pride in the appearance of the village.

In its early years the Horticultural Society had over one hundred members. Dues were one dollar and the province provided a small grant as well to the society.

Popular events in the past in Exeter were the skating races and the carnivals. Both ice skating and roller skating were popular amusements. The first ice skating rink was probably located approximately where the Town Hall now stands. In 1877 the Exeter skating rink was selling family season tickets for three dollars. On March 8, 1877 the Times reported that "The rink is crowded nightly, the frosts of the past few days making skating excellent." The editor urged the people to skate, stating that it was "a healthy and invigorating exercise". There were carnivals and races on this outdoor rink, but the first "skating carnival that ever took place in Exeter under cover was held in the rink in the drill shed", in January, 1885. According to the report there was "a good crowd both of spectators and masked and costumed skaters". There were ex-

hibitions of fast and fancy skating and "altogether the carnival passed off very pleasantly". Messrs. James Weekes and Samuel Sweet operated the rink calling it the Royal Skating Rink. People skated to the music of harmonica, violin and guitar.

Ice skating carnivals remained popular for decades and everyone of the six rinks that Exeter has had were scenes of these colourful events. In February, 1900 a carnival was held in Bawden's Rink in aid of the Red Cross Fund. The festivities started with a parade led by the band and twenty of the volunteers captained by George Harness. The costumes in the carnival were excellent and the judges C. H. Sanders, N. Dyer-Hurdon and F. E. Karn awarded prizes to Miss G. Hicks, Gertie Kemp, Mrs. P. Bawden, W. Hern and Edgar Bissett.

Exeterites would often travel to other centres for these carnivals and races as they did in the winter of 1886 when Sam Sweet, James Bissett, and Chris Willis won prizes in Parkhill. Bissett placed second in a three-mile race. Carnivals remained popular and frequent events until fairly recent decades in town. The band often provided the music.

Roller skating in the Dominion Roller Rink was popular as long as the rink stood. As we note elsewhere it existed for only about seven years. The best roller skater in Exeter in the 1880's was John Vail. In one five-mile race in 1886, George Eacrett raced neck-and-neck with Vail for seventy laps around the rink but Vail finally pulled ahead. Vail raced for money against skaters from neighbouring towns. On April 8, 1886, for example, Vail and Robert Cornyn of Wingham raced for $25.00 and the championship of Huron County. "Cornyn made a good start leaving Vail nearly half a lap behind ... until the 30th round when Vail closed on him and at the 60th, lap glided past". The race was five miles long which was 80 laps and Vail's time was 17 minutes and 15 seconds. The Times remarked that Vail had "remarkable control of his nerves" and exhibited "remarkable staying qualities". Said the Times, "five miles scarcely warms him up". It was reported that considerable money changed hands. A return race in Wingham was declared a draw. According to the report Cornyn tripped Vail as Vail passed him on the 78th lap. The "unsportsmanlike Winghamites" charged Vail $1.50 to practice. Vail challenged Cornyn to race for $500.00 in London but evidently the Wingham skater did not accept.

There was a big carnival on New Year's Eve in 1886. This event was part of Exeter's festivities that year which also included a ball and supper at the "Lorne Hotel". The night ended with a brawl in the streets which Constable Gill finally terminated. The music for these roller skating carnivals was supplied by the brass band and harmonic band. The Dominion Roller Rink collapsed in

December, 1892 In 1947 an outdoor rink was opened in Exeter by E Neil This rink ceased to operate some years ago

Figure skating has also provided recreation in Exeter for a number of years

Another activity that went on in the rink was horseshoe pitching In the summer of 1929 the Dome Rink management laid out five horseshoe 'courts' A club was organized with Fred Ellerington as President On May 24, 1930 a horseshoe tournament was held under the supervision of the Dominion of Canada Horseshoe Pitchers' Association The Dominion champions were there as well as many other excellent players Horseshoe pitching has enjoyed off and on popularity in Exeter At present the game is not played in Exeter. The last area used for play was the rear yard of the blacksmith shop at the corner of Huron and Main streets.

Bicycle riding was introduced in Exeter in the early 1880's Messrs Verity, Bowerman and Gundy were among the first in the village to own "wheels" People rode all over the area Rides to Goderich, Hensall and Dashwood were frequent. In the summer of 1886 one man got lost when he rode from Exeter to Dashwood to Khiva thence to Crediton where he stayed overnight Bicycles scared the horses as the following item from 1884 indicates Three Lucan boys in a buggy met a bicycle south of Exeter. The horse was frightened and threw the buggy into the ditch resulting in a broken leg for one of the boys In 1892 a bicycle club was organized with Dr. Lutz as President and N Dyer-Hurdon as Vice-President There were twelve members including A J McTavish, Frank Wood, W Browning, Ed Carley and Frank Lutz. The club was active for several years holding regular rides and entering members in various races. W E Browning was considered to be the County Champion in the 2 mile race His time was five minutes and forty-nine seconds A noteworthy ride was one by George Southcott who is reported to have ridden to Toronto and back in one day

Other amusements were organized by the Y P C A which existed in the early 1870's In those early years it held debates, socials, oyster suppers and so on In 1920 and 1921 Y P C A clubrooms were established on the second floor of the old Pickard building Men such as Frank Boyle and J S Harvey had gone to the James Street Church Board for support of the project In January, 1921 the rooms were opened and by May of that year a bowling alley had been installed and the rooms admirably fitted for youthful recreation The Directors were R N Rowe, J M Southcott, G S Howard Wm Rivers, R Welsh, F Boyle and W S Cole Various team sports were sponsored by this organization which carried on for a number of years

Scouts also provided an activity for the youth In 1915 R G

Seldon had tried to organize a Scout group but was not successful. By 1921 however, there was an active group with Tom Pryde as Scoutmaster and J. M. Harvey, Assistant Scoutmaster, and W. S. Stanbury as troop leader. In the early 1920's some of the Exeter scouts went to a model camp at the Toronto Exhibition. The boys were Reg Beavers, Ted Taman, George Hind, Derry Boyle and Harold Whyte. Stuart Stanbury was the first King Scout in Exeter receiving the award in 1926. Various men have led the Scouts over the past fifty years since the first Charter was issued. Ted Buswell, Harold Whyte, Alf Andrus, Owen Atkinson, Harvey Pfaff, Don Traquair, Rene Van der Neut, Terry Lawrence, Hal Hooke, Ralph Sweitzer, and Doug Harrison are some. Cubs, Rovers, Brownies, Guides and Rangers have also operated. The first Guide Company was formed in 1931 with Ruby Creech and Marion Woods as leaders.

Many other activities could be discussed here. There was a Canada Club. There were excursions by rail and boat. The introduction of new forms of amusements such as radio, phonographs, and television were the occasion of village amusement. For example, in July, 1904 Robert Sanders gave a free concert in the Town Hall with his new "magnificent gramophone". Mr. Wilbur Martin assisted Mr. Sanders to "manipulate the machine" as it played the 'Good Old Summer Time', 'Lead Kindly Light' and the Vesper Service by the Hayden Quartette. In the summer of 1949 Reg Beavers' store displayed a television set and the store was a popular place as people stared at the tube. In 1946 Willards Ontario Panorama was broadcast from the Exeter Arena by Gordon Sinclair and Allan Savage who interviewed Jack Green, Mrs. J. G. Cochrane, Ed. Sweitzer and Preston Dearing.

The bowling alley was opened in 1948. The poolroom opened in 1937. After over sixty years of resistance to the evil, Exeter's governing body relented but only after the village Solicitor told Council that they could not restrict a lawful business. In 1955 when Red Scott took over the local billiard emporium he staged a Council Tournament. Mayor Pooley and Reeve Mackenzie battled over the green felt. This was a far cry from the days when Councillors would not even permit a poolroom let alone enter one.

A major feature of the Exeter scene for well over one hundred years has been the Fair. The Exeter Fair can trace its origins to 1845. In that year the London Road Branch of the Agricultural Society was established. In 1854 the Exeter Branch of the Agricultural Society replaced the London Road Branch. This organization included the people in the Townships of Usborne and Stephen. By 1857 there were 87 members and the Board of Agriculture in Upper Canada in 1857 reported that the Usborne

and Stephen Agricultural Society had good sheep, good cows and the best hogs in the County. The first fair was held in Exeter in 1854 and over the years in the 1850's and 1860's the fair was "noted for its prosperity and the number of fine animals annually brought out". The Fair has operated, then, for nearly 120 years.

The schools and churches also contributed to the Village's amusements. Separate chapters will discuss these institutions and their contributions to village life.

The remark by "The Burkley's resident sociologists" in an article in the U W O Gazette said that in Exeter "the rich curl, the middle classes bowl and the lower classes play darts" does not bear examination. In Exeter almost all sports and entertainments have enjoyed the support of all "social classes". Until recently, Exeter's activities, like those of all small communities needed the support of most of the population to succeed.

chapter 6

Sport in Exeter

Everybody loves a winner but it takes real civic pride to get out and support a team until it becomes a winner

(C E Boyle)

Over the years sports of various kinds have been played in Exeter Sport provided small-town Ontario with an opportunity of making contact with the neighbouring towns Sport provided an important outlet for the men of nineteenth century small town Ontario men worked long hard hours but they still looked forward to participation in some form of athletic activity and the competition it provided Women did not have the same opportunity to become involved in sports until after 1920

Sport provides small-town Ontario with an important source of the legends and myths of the small town Every town has its sports heroes Exeter has its share of sports heroes whose feats are recounted from time to time in the lodge halls, coffee shops and arenas Dick Seldon's bowling feats, the three Pickard boys' hockey ability, "Goldie" Cochrane, Tom Carling's "no hitters," Babe Siebert, "Derry" Boyle (Sr and Jr), "Boom" Gravett Si Creech's hitting and fielding, Tom Yearley's horses, Bill Oberle, Johnny

Rether and many others would be included in an Exeter sports hall of fame

Some towns win more than their share of Ontario or Canadian championships. Exeter has not won many championships in any sports. As far as can be determined Exeter had never won an All-Ontario hockey championship until 1972 when the Ontario Junior D Championship came to Exeter. Several teams - Intermediates in the early 1920's, Midgets and Juniors in 1971, have come close. The 1971 Novice team won the equivalent of an Ontario championship and that was the closest Exeter came to an Ontario Championship until 1972. The Exeter Midget baseball team won a provincial championship in 1956 to bring the only all-Ontario baseball championship ever to come to Exeter.

In 1950 the Exeter Maroons, a junior basketball team won the Ontario Basketball Association championship to put Exeter on the Ontario basketball map. Numerous lawn bowling championships came to Exeter in the years immediately before and after the First World War. Indeed, Exeter remained an important lawn bowling centre for twenty years or more after World War I and still boasts a fine green.

Audrey Pooley won the All Ontario Junior Badminton Championship and finished second in the Canadian Tournament. She was a citizen of Stratford at the time but perhaps Exeter can now lay claim to her athletic prowess.

There is a story, unconfirmed, that Exeter won some type of Canadian lacrosse championship in the 1880's but no information seems to be available.

Championships are not everything, however, and Exeter need not be unduly concerned that so few championships have come to the town. Participation in sports has always been maintained at a high level in the town. There have been town leagues, local tournaments, church leagues, spontaneously organized events, school sports, as well as inter-town competition. The variety of sports played is impressive and the numbers of participants equally as impressive.

It was also apparent that from the beginning of sports activities in town "all sorts and conditions of men" played at all of the sports. Exeter, like other small towns in Ontario in the nineteenth century and early years of this century had a socially stratified community but an examination of the names of the players would reveal that members of Exeter's more socially prominent families played the various games with the less socially prominent folk. Indeed, the leadership in sport came from the men who might be described as the community leaders. Charges that certain sports were more socially acceptable than others cannot be substantiated in Exeter since one can find names from all sections of the community listed as participants in all sports

A sketch of each of the various sports played in Exeter over the years follows

HOCKEY

> "While the game of ice hockey was in some respects solely Canadian, it was also indebted to early Europeans who developed the art of skating and to those Britons who conceived the idea of playing a form of field hockey on frozen English fens"
>
> (from One Hundred Not Out, Henry Roxborough)

This game on ice was called bandy on ice and used a ball One of the first games played in Canada occurred in Montreal in 1837 There were eight players goal, point, cover-point, centre, rover, home, right side, left side Shinny was referred to in Kingston in the 1840's as being played by the soldiers garrisoned there There is, apparently, evidence that garrison troops in Halifax in the 1700's played a game copied from the Indians called hurley on ice The troops put on skates and adopted the Indians' game There is reference to 'hoquet' (hockey on ice) in Acadia It is not part of this work to attempt a recounting of the history of hockey consequently, suffice to say that by 1890 hockey had spread across Ontario and on November 27, 1890 the Ontario Hockey Association was founded "By 1900 the game of shinny-on-your-own side though still rough was welcomed by all classes of society - from urchins playing on the streets to governors-general and silk-hatted friends sitting in regal boxes at crowd-filled arenas"

It is difficult, if not impossible to determine when the first game of hockey was played in Exeter No doubt boys played shinny on the pond above the grist mill dam during the late 1880's and some hockey may have been played on the outdoor rink operated by James Weekes and Sam Sweet on the site of the town hall, on property then owned by J N Howard This outdoor rink existed in the 1870's These two later used the old Drill Hall as a rink It was located approximately where the present horse barn stands on the Fair Grounds Hockey may have been played there as well in the 1880's It is doubtful if hockey was played to any extent, though, before the late 1880's since hockey did not get started even in Toronto before the late 1880's The rinks of Weekes and Sweet were used chiefly for skating The rink in the Drill Shed was called the "Royal Skating Rink" and was opened for skating in 1884 There is, however, no record of hockey ever being played in this rink which was the first covered rink in Exeter The second covered rink in town was located at the south-west corner of Andrew and John Streets This rink, "The Dominion Roller Rink" extended from where the former R N Creech house stands, southwards This rink was primarily a roller rink but sawdust was spread over the boards and ice put in during the winter. Again there is no indication that hockey was ever played in this rink which collapsed on December 2, 1892, only seven years after its erection in 1885.

The first indoor rink on which hockey was played was on Peter Bawden's rink which was located on Laughall Street (Gidley East) across from where the high school now stands. This rink had a row of pillars down either side. While the skaters could skate around the outside perimeter the hockey players had to dodge the pillars. Players undoubtedly "kept their heads up" in those days. The rink was more suited for skating races, carnivals, recreational skating and curling, than it was for hockey. Nevertheless, in the 1890's hockey was played in this rink despite the hazards of the pillars.

The first organized hockey played in Exeter began in the late 1890's. On February 16, 1897 Exeter defeated Clinton 6 to 5, this game was preceded by public skating and by races. In the races John Spackman defeated Fred Hawkshaw in the two-mile event. A few games were played in 1898 with Exeter playing various nearby towns such as Hensall, Clinton, and Seaforth. One of the games in 1898 was described in length, some excerpts from this description are given:

> "A fast exciting and phenomenally close match was the result of the meeting between Seaforth and Exeter teams Tuesday night. The game was called shortly after 8 p.m. The home team however had not yet awakened from dreams of what they were going to do with Seaforth and first thing they knew the score was 1-0 ... this woke the boys up ... and after fifteen minutes of hard, fast work a shot by Tremaine made the score 1-all. (Seaforth then went ahead 3-1 but Exeter fought back to tie the score.) A splendid rush and scoring shot by Willis brought down the house and the score stood 3-all. (Then) Tremaine got the puck, carried it up the side, passed it to Evans who in turn sent it to Willis and the score stood 4-3. Fortune now deserted Exeter ... and four minutes before time a shot by "Stonewall" Jackson evened the score. Now came the "most unkindest cut of all." Seaforth scored the winning goal at the exact moment that the bell called Time ... A particularly good game was put up by the defence, Messrs. Gidley and Dignan."

The organization of hockey in Exeter in 1899 was the responsibility of the following men:

Hon. President - Reeve Spackman
President - N. D. Hurdon
Vice President - Dr. Rollins
2nd V. President - Joseph Senior
3rd V. President - P. L. Bishop
Treasurer - R. N. Creech
Secretary - B. C. Gidley

Captain - Frank Snell
Manager - Chas H Snell

Managing Committee
R C C Tremaine
C H Sanders
Frank Willis

As the century turned, hockey was operating in Exeter in a fairly well organized way There were two town teams, a Junior and Senior team The games were played on Bawden's Rink and directed by a committee as mentioned above The admission charge was 15¢ for "gents", 10¢ for "ladies and children" Games were played against neighbouring villages and towns In one game against Clinton "Mallet in goal for Exeter made some excellent stops" and "Creech at cover point proved a speedy man on his skates and handled his stick well" The Advocate observed that "The Exeter team are a quiet, gentlemanly set" The 1901 team consisted of the following seven men all of whom played the entire game in those days without a break except for the half-time period There were two halves instead of three periods at that time The players, in 1901 were F Taylor (goal), F Hawkshaw (point), D Evans (cover point) and forwards, one of whom was rover, L Cann, W West, B Hooper and R Southcott

In 1902 the team took the name Exeter "Devons" and consisted of Dignan (goal), Snell (point), Hawkshaw (cover point) and forwards Evans, Russell, Southcott, Cann and Hardy The boys played a rough game in Parkhill one night in February and tied 5 to 5 but Parkhill was overly dirty and the "goal umpire was apparently crosseyed" The "Devons ' in December 1903 were Exeter's first entry into Ontario Hockey Association play With their new red and white sweaters the "Devons" entered an Intermediate league with the London St Johns, St Marys and Watford The Parkhill Gazette, ever high in praise of Exeter observed that before the season ended the Exeter Devons would be the Exeter "Deaduns" The team captain was Sandy Bawden and the Executive consisted of W W Taman, W J Heaman, E W Horne and R N Creech Honorary members of the Executive were N D Hurdon, A Q Bobier, and F E Karn The players and the executive paid a membership to belong to the club P Bawden provided practice time on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for the team

The opening game was January, 1904 with Exeter defeating St Marys 5 to 3 St Marys came by train and were late "The work done by the home team was of first class order" Exeter's players were Myers in goal who "stopped shots that looked like winners", Ross on point whose "lifting puts the puck from end to end of the rink directly on the opposite nets", it was a feature of the game, Ford on coverpoint, Bawden (rover), Hawkshaw (right wing) Hickey (centre), McColmbe (left wing). This was the first O.H.A. game ever played in Exeter. Exeter, however had less luck with the St. Johns Athletic Club of London. "The London rink was much larger and threw our boys off", and Exeter lost 5 to 1. London went on to win the League. In Junior play that year Exeter won several games against Ailsa Craig, Hensall and Clinton. The Ailsa Craig paper complained that the Exeter boys were too "rough and tough".

In 1912 hockey was given a new lease in Exeter when Mr. William Leavitt opened "The Dome Rink" on the Gould property opposite the Town Hall (the present site of McKerlie Automotive). It extended back onto the property now occupied by the Legion. The formal opening took place on January 15, 1912. The Advocate reported the opening as follows:

> "The formal opening of the skating rink took place in the form of a carnival. Reeve W. J. Heaman and Rev. D. W. Collins were present and delivered inaugural addresses in which they referred to the enterprise and worthy citizenship of the proprietor, William Leavitt, in erecting such a magnificent place of amusement for those who enjoy the exhilarating pastime of skating or the roaring game of curling."

The building was of corrugated iron, it had a circular dome roof and was "one of the finest in Western Ontario with a magnificent sheet of ice" 180 feet long and 80 feet wide, 25 feet of ice was partitioned off to provide ice for curling. The rink would seat 300. In the opening carnival prizes were won by Oscar Anderson, and Owen Atkinson in the mile race, Maurice Senior and Harry Parsons won in the half-mile race. Costume prizes were won by Ernest Harvey (Indian Chief), Latimer Grieve (squaw). Olive and Leon Treble. The new town band was in attendance. The Bawden rink was closed when the Dome opened and was eventually converted by Ted Bawden to the manufacture of cement blocks, pillars and other concrete products. The Dome Rink collapsed in December 1927. Mr. Leavitt had rented the rink that year to Mr. Frank M. Boyle. It was re-erected and collapsed again in 1934 leaving the town without a rink. Some would suggest that the "golden age" of hockey in Exeter was lived in the old Dome Rink during the 1920's.

In any case, one of the first hockey games ever played in the Dome was between Hensall and Exeter Juniors which Exeter won 5 to 4. The Hensall Observer noted that "in the first half Hensall played the Exeter team to a standstill and Exeter seeing that they could not win by playing hockey started to rough it and if a Hensall player got hold of the puck in the second half he was lucky to come out without a few broken bones. This is usual with the Exeter bunch who are noted for being poor sports ... The crowd managed to swipe quite a bunch of caps and gloves and everything of value left in the Hensall boys' coats."

The Advocate remarked "It is regrettable that the Hensall fellows could not take a defeat without passing all kinds of dirty insinuations in which there is not a particle of truth".

An Exeter team consisting of F. Graham (goal), H. Elliott (point), J. E. Elliott (cover point), S. Fisher (rover), T. Carling (centre), Earl Southcott (right wing) and O. Atkinson (left wing) defeated Hensall 6 to 5 in another game that year.

Hockey continued to expand and in 1914 an active Town League operated. There were four teams the Oddfellows, Clerks, Bankers and High School. All of the players cannot be named here but one or two from each team are given.

Oddfellows	Frank Boyle, J. M. Southcott
Clerks	Clarence Pickard, J. Elliott
Bankers	Allan Pickard, W. Snell
High School	Cecil Pickard, E. Southcott

In addition the Town team played various games. The 1914 team had T. Penhale (goal), R. Atkinson (defence), B. Rivers (defence), Snell (rover), Earl Southcott (center), A. Pickard (right wing), C. Pickard (left wing), other players included N. E. Harrington, and S. Elliott. In one game E. Southcott got 5 goals and Al Pickard 4 as Exeter defeated Lucan 13 to 3. In March of 1914 a team consisting of players from Zurich, Hensall, Seaforth and Toronto "under the name of Zurich" defeated Exeter. The Times said that it took those four places to beat Exeter. In that game "the Toronto man was a peach".

Throughout the decade 1910-20, Exeter's hockey teams played well. Such stars as Allan Pickard, Clarence Pickard, Russ Southcott, E. Southcott, "Goldie" Cochrane, "Tiny" Torrance ("Whose fondness for talking was responsible for opposition goals"), Rivers, Harvey, Atkinson, M. Senior provided the spectators at the Dome Rink with plenty of entertainment. There were junior and senior teams and the rivalry with nearby communities was strong. If Exeter lost, the Advocate and the Times could be depended upon to comment. For example, a loss to Ailsa Craig in 1915 drew the following observations:

> "The referee made a mess of things from the start ... the visitors had come to win and the referee was out to give them everything. He never saw an offside unless made by an Exeter player ... Slashing, tripping and whalloping were in order ... Earl Southcott was struck in the chest ..."

Among the players mentioned during this period were the

Pickards, Allan,Clare and Cecil, Cecil was killed in the First World War Clare became an important community leader and Allan went to the west where he remained until his retirement As J M Southcott remarked, "The Pickards, like the others, played for the love of the game They provided their own hockey sticks and equipment, as well as having to pay for practicing at the rink" In those years, Heaman's store was selling hockey sticks for prices ranging from ten cents to one dollar In 1916, Heamans had a special on Automobile Skates at one dollar to five dollars

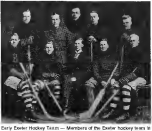
Allan Pickard went on to become the most well known and most important hockey figure to come from Exeter Allan moved west about 1920 He eventually became a school principal in Regina He played hockey for various teams in the west, later coaching such teams as the Regina Aces He held various offices in the C A H A and W H L He was president of the C.A.H.A in 1947, the Regina Leader-Post said in that year

> "Most centres have their own Mr Hockey but the real one is in Regina — Alan W Pickard is president of the C A H A and controls more hockey players than any man in the world"

Mr Pickard was recognized in 1958 as one of Canada's leading hockey figures when he was elected to the Hockey Hall of Fame He was added to the list of "hockey builders" at the same time as Senator Donat Raymond George McNamara, George Dudley, James Norris, Conn Smyth, and Lloyd Turner The accomplishments and contributions to hockey of Allan Pickard are probably not widely known to the younger citizens of Exeter but Exeter is proud that a native son is ranked in the Hockey Hall of Fame with the other greats of the game

Frank "Derry" Boyle

The decade closed with Exeter having established a good basis for hockey in the 1920's An important hockey figure in those days was "Derry" Boyle Sr who managed some of the teams His barbershop was a headquarters for sport and as winter approached the boys met there to organize the town league and the town teams They had lots of time in the fall since ice was frequently not ready until late December or early January. The season ended in March with games often being played on water-covered ice. Of course natural ice continued to be common in most small towns and the author can remember how the kids would look forward to the coming of the cold weather and to the process of ice making in the local rink.



Early Exeter Hockey Team — Members of the Exeter hockey team in the year 1913 or 1914 were: top row, C. V. Pickerd, right wing; "Tiny" Torrance, sub-goalie; inset, Clarence Hoffman; Al Pickerd, right wing, Bert Rivers, defence; bottom row, Cecil Pickard, who lost his life in the First Great War; Earl Southcott, centre; "Derry" Boyle, manager, Bill Kydd, goalie; and Morris Senior.

A second member of the Hockey Hall of Fame has an association with Exeter. Charles Albert 'Babe" Siebert played for Exeter or more accurately, the Exeter-Zurich Intermediate team in 1921 and 1922. Siebert was born in Plattsville in 1904. His family moved to Zurich when he was about six. He was, in addition to being an outstanding hockey player, a fine baseball player and played on the 1920 Zurich Intermediate team which won the All Ontario Intermediate Championship. Siebert played left field. He began playing hockey in Zurich but it was in 1922 that he attracted widespread attention while playing for the Exeter-Zurich Intermediate team. The following year he played Junior in Kitchener and later he played for the Niagara Falls Senior team. In

HOCKEY HALL OF FAME
AL PICKARD

Al Pickard's Plaque in the Hockey Hall of Fame

1925 he began his professional career with the Montreal Maroons He also played with the New York Rangers and the Boston Bruins where he played defence with Eddie Shore He ended his fourteen-year playing career in 1939 with the Montreal Canadiens

> "During his term with the N H L Babe developed one of the hardest shots in the league as both a left winger and a defenceman he scored 140 goals and assisted in 159 others On three different occasions he was named to the first all-star team"

In 1937 he was awarded the Hart Trophy as the most valuable player in the league In the summer of 1939 he was named coach of the Canadiens

Tragically, Siebert never did take over the coaching duties On Friday, August 24, 1939 he drowned at St Joseph

> "Shortly before 4 p m Siebert with his two daughters Judie 11 and Joan 10 went with Clayton Hoffman to the lake They went in bathing by the old wooden pier at St Joseph When one of the children saw the inflated tire she was using for a float carried out from her depth by waves she asked her father to recover it Siebert swam out and was about to grab the tire which had floated about 150 feet from shore

when he shouted for help . . . Hoffman swam out (but) he could find no sign of his chum the search continued, early Monday morning the body was recovered "

The early 1920's, then, were important hockey years in Exeter In 1920 Exeter and Zurich combined to enter an O H A Intermediate Team "Goldie" Cochrane was named coach and Derry Boyle manager The 'Advocate' remarked that "Goldie" is a pro-hockey player and knows the game with the best of them", Clayton "Big Dodo" Hoffman was to be the captain (Hoffman later became a teacher in Galt) The Executives in the club were Major Heaman (President), Tony Wurm (Vice-President), T R Ferguson (Secretary), and Bill Brown (Treasurer) The home games were to be played in the 'Dome' Rink operated by "Goldie" Cochrane's father-in-law Mr Leavitt Cochrane by the way, had established quite a hockey reputation before coming to Exeter He was considered "to have been one of the four greatest hockey players ever to play in Kitchener" In 1951 at the opening of the new Kitchener Arena Frank Selke paid tribute to "Goldie" placing him in the same category as a player with Milt Schmidt, Jim Coleman and Art Hiller Cochrane played Senior A hockey in Kitchener with the Flying Dutchmen He played in Michigan with Houghton in an early league called the Copper League and he played for the first Montreal Canadien team in 1910 He also played in Galt During the First World War he served with the Canadian Army and was wounded at St Eloi "Goldie" died in 1952

In these early years of the 1920's Exeter was in an Intermediate Group with St Marys, Mitchell, Goderich and Clinton In 1921 the team consisted of Dick Harness in goal Clayton "Big Dodo" Hoffman and Hindmarsh on defence, Clarence "Little Dodo" Hoffman centre, S Robinson from Ailsa Craig right wing, E J R Bertram left wing, Substitutes M Senior, Siebert, Callfas, O'Brien This 1921 team in their "nifty" green and gold uniforms won the group and proceeded to play Stratford for the honours in the Northern Hockey League Senior group In the first game of the two game total goals series Exeter-Zurich won 6 to 4 in the Dome "The sudden halt to Stratford's chain of victories came as a surprise to the visitors" This was Stratford's first loss of the season In the second game Stratford defeated Exeter 6 to 2 to win the series by two goals Two hundred fans went by train from Exeter Bertram, who checked Howie Morenz into the ice was injured when Morenz finally slashed Bertram across the knee Babe Siebert then took Bertram's place This may have been the first game in which the two future stars of N H L , Howie Morenz and Babe Siebert, met in a game The report of the game said "Morenz at centre for the home team played a fast game and was easily the best man on the Stratford team." He was a recruit from the Juniors to strengthen the Intermediates and he scored three of the six goals scored by Stratford.

Besides Morenz the Stratford lineup included Malone in goal, Berger, Carroll, Kelterbourne, R. and B. Lovell. The Exeter team had McGeough in goal, (Dick Harness played goal in the first game), Hindmarsh and Hoffman on defence, Bertram, Hoffman and Robinson on the forward line andSiebertas a substitute. It was reported that "Sid Rankin of London, a Stratford Old Boy, handled the bell and he showed that his heart was with the old town. Exeter drew the heavy end of his decisions".

The report of the first game noted that Siebert was "A dark horse and we are going to spring something with him very soon".

Hindmarsh and Hoffman were considered to be "a stone wall, a real pair of men", Bertram had "a great poke check" and Stu Robinson was a "classy player". The players of 1921 were basically the same players that went on to greater success in 1922.

The 1922 Intermediate team had Cook from Hensall in goal, D. Harness sub goalie, Hindmarsh and Hoffman on defence, with Clarence Hoffman, Robinson, and Siebert on the forward line. Other players were McKinnon, Callfas and George. This team won their Intermediate group again. In the O.H.A. playoffs the team eliminated Sarnia in the two game goals to count series losing the first game in Sarnia 4 to 2 but winning the second 11 to 6. The loss to Sarnia was on Feb. 17 and was the first loss of the season. Apparently the Sarnia goal keeper handled 59 shots and Cook handled 29. In the second game "They even made the fans who have been following them sit up and take notice for it was not thought that they could uncork such speed and stick handling". Other comments on the game included:

– "The forward line are showing some hair raising stuff"
"Cook played the game of his life"
"They are a bunch of all-stars"
"The defence broke up the Sarnia rushes with ease"
"A cleaner pair of players never donned a uniform"

The Intermediates then went against Kitchener in their quest for the O.H.A. Intermediate Championship but they lost out to "a real hockey team". The report of the game suggested that "our boys were off in their shooting". Dodo Hoffman was out of the game "through illness". Hindmarsh had a sore shoulder and the referee was poor and was "booed and we think it was coming to him". The Times said "The local team played a clean, snappy game and took their defeat like gentlemen".

That team may have been the best team, relative to the period of history, that Exeter ever iced. In addition to Siebert, who did play in the National Hockey League it is said that Clarence Hoffman also was National League calibre.

In the middle and later years of the 1920's Exeter continued to play Intermediate hockey in various leagues but did not come as close to an O.H.A. Championship as it did in 1922. In 1925 the players were Cook in goal, M. Hey, Leroy O'Brien on defence, Shaddock, H. Wells, L. Statham on the forward line, and L. O'Brien and H. Hogarth as substitutes. Exeter also had a Junior team in some of the years of the 1920's including 1924 when Walper, Hey, Statham, Hind, O'Brien and others formed the team. In the latter years of the 1920's Exeter was in the "Cyclone League' with Hensall, Zurich and Dashwood. Some of the more prominent players who played for Exeter in the Cyclone League years of the 1920's were George Moir (goal), Bruce Tuckey and George Hind (defence), Harvey Pollen (centre), Pete Willard, Bruce Medd, Bill Lawson and Harvey Snell.

In addition to the Intermediate hockey and Junior hockey there were town league teams and, indeed, two girls' hockey teams. One consisted of Florence Harvey (goal), Mildred Rowe, Mary Elworthy (defence), wings Gertie Francis, Peg Wethey, Amelia Acheson centre.

The Junior team won their group in 1930. The players were goal, Bunny Ford, defence, Munn, Passmore, centre, Snell,, wings, Creech and Joynt. Subs were Boyle, Howey and Pryde. Basically the same team with the addition of Foster and Yungblut played Junior again in 1931. In one 1931 game "Boyle bulged the twine" to break a 30 minute overtime game.

One of Exeter's players suffered a serious injury in 1933 and it took place in a friendly game between Crediton and Main Street United Churches. Harvey Pollen lost an eye as a result of this injury. In the early 30's Exeter continued to enter Intermediate hockey and Junior hockey. The Intermediate players included Dick Harness, Hap Wells, Bruce Tuckey, Derry Boyle, Rus Snell, Si Creech, Leroy O'Brien, Ed Gascho and Yungblut. The Juniors included Welsh, Passmore, Foster, Pryde, Joynt, Boyle and Yungblut. The stamina of the players was indicated by one event in 1930 when the players went by sleigh to Hensall over blocked roads. Cars started out for the game and "with digging and shovelling, pushing and pulling they got through". After the game players had to walk home to Exeter from Hensall, some not getting home till 5 a.m.

In 1934 the Dome rink collapsed for the second time and Exeter was without a rink until the fall of 1936 when the town undertook to construct a new rink. In the winter of 1936 public meetings were held to discuss building a rink. Such men as A. Traquair, George Lawson, T Pryde, F W Gladman, C V Pickard, J G Stanbury, R G Seldon and Fred Ellerington lent their support to the project Some prominent citizens such as W. D. Sanders opposed the project Others also opposed the arena which was to have other facilities as well One writer to the Times said

> "Can we hope that the combination of skating rink, dance hall, euchre playing rooms, assembly hall and agriculture display rooms will be a success . . Dance halls with their accompanying drinking of beer and other spiritous liquor are a curse to any town . . . Our young people are being debauched . . . Our churches are humiliated . . ."

The Times Editor supported the Arena as did a majority of ratepayers who voted that the village erect the arena by a margin of 215 to 129

The Ontario Municipal Board approved the project in October 1936 W D Sanders was still opposed, he noted that the town had spent five hundred dollars on relief in 1934 and in 1935, $1,016.63 Taxes were too high! The Rev. Mr Down felt that the fair board, those wishing a school gym, and those wishing a rink "railroaded" the project through He said it was not in the interest of the retired farmer W. D. Sanders said the voting had been irregular Reeve Tom Pryde who was Chairman of the Building Committee and Council supported the project and construction began in November 1937 The contractor was N. Hipel of Preston The ice surface was 70 x 170 feet, the gym was 40 x 72 feet The gym was to be used by the high school It was reported to be "the only one of its kind in Ontario."

The building cost $10,000. It was paid for by a debenture issue Debentures at par were one hundred dollars but sold for $104 bearing 4% interest The building was erected in seven weeks Unfortunately the mild weather delayed the making of ice until mid February The arena was opened on Tuesday, February 16 for public skating The first hockey game in the new arena was played between Dashwood and Exeter The line ups for this first game were for Exeter, Creech, defence; Ford goal, N. Wells defence, McDonald centre, Wings were Willard and Cornish subs Hockey, Laing, Dinney, Buswell, Norton, Ryckman The line up for Dashwood included Goetz, Tieman, Restemeyer, K Wein, W Wein, Klump, Kellerman, Hopcroft, Guenther, Ness, Eveland The referee was Charles Triebner Exeter won the game on a goal by Creech

So Exeter had a new arena The sixth to serve the town At the time it was built it was given a life of thirty years but it is still standing at the time of this writing The Arena Board was to consist of three councillors, one school board member, one fair board member, and two businessmen The arena or Community Centres

Board continued to administer the arena and adjacent park until the 1960's when a new Municipal Committee responsible for recreation, the arena, and parks was formed.

For the balance of the pre-war years Exeter entered the Cyclone League which varied from year to year in its make up but usually had entries from Zurich, Hensall, Exeter and sometimes from Dashwood, Crediton and Lucan. These pre-war players included "Si" Creech who played "outstanding hockey" and was perhaps the best stick handler on the team. Bob Dinney, Gene Beaver, Vern Heywood, Rus Snell, C. Cornish, Bunny Ford, Reg McDonald, Wes Ryckman and others. The Cyclone League champion from 1926 to 1938 inclusive was the Zurich team. In 1939 Hensall won the MacMillan cup symbolic of Cyclone League supremacy.

There were two town hockey leagues for boys sponsored by the Lions Club. There were four teams for boys aged nine to twelve and four teams for boys aged thirteen to sixteen. In order to play the boys had to have certification from the principal that their schoolwork was satisfactory. In addition the boys could not smoke, swear or loiter around the arena. There were a large number of players and few were suspended, consequently they must have been adept at concealing their sins since few boys could measure up in all of those categories.

High school hockey also occupied ice time during the late 1930's. The high school players included Southcott, Heywood, Ryckman, Moore, A. Fahner, W. Fahner, Baynham, Wuerth, England and others. The school team played matches against neighbouring schools.

Exeter entered a team in the Cyclone League in 1940, 41 and 42 but the league ceased to operate after the 1942 season until 1947 because of the war. The Lucan Irish won the League Championship in 1940, 1941 and 1942. The Cyclone League revived in 1947 with B. W. Tuckey as President. There were teams from Hensall, Zurich, Lucan, Dashwood, Grand Bend and Exeter. Exeter's entry was managed by "Hap" Wells. The team went on to win the League Championship. This was the first time in the history of the League that Exeter won. The team members included Andy Bierling (goal), Gerry Smith (goal), Wes Ryckman, Doug Fletcher, H. Brintnell, Doug Brintnell, Tim Stire, George Shaw, Reg. McDonald, Don Brintnell, D. Preszcator, Graham Mason, Ross Tuckey and others. The play-off games that year drew 800 to 900 spectators. The star player of the post war Cyclone League team was undoubtedly George Shaw. George had played in the 1936 Olympics with the Canadian team. He had played on the wartime Intermediate A team which represented Exeter in the O.H.A. Intermediate A competition That team was called the Exeter Fliers and they played against the Clinton Sparks, Seaforth Beavers and Goderich The Exeter players were from R C A F station Centralia and included over the years, in addition to George Shaw players such as Young, Wright, Webb, Allan, Bradley, Gunter, Graham, Forsyth, Wazorkie, Plummers, Brennan Tait, O'Shea, Huile and many others This team provided top calibre hockey for Exeter during the later war years In 1943 the team won the group and advanced in Intermediate play against the Windsor Colonials The Fliers won the opening game 6 to 5 but lost the series During the 1944 season the Fliers led by Shaw won the group championship and also the championship of Number One Training Command, defeating Brantford and Mountain View The latter team had two National Hockey League players, Claude Bourque and Pat McCreary.

One of the biggest crowds in the history of the Exeter arena saw the Fliers defeat the army team from London The 1200 fans had been promised that Syl Apps, the great Leaf star from Paris, Ontario would be playing for the army team, but Apps failed to appear He did, however play for the army when the Fliers played a return match on March 20 in Stratford before 1700 spectators Apps scored one goal and had three assists George Shaw led the Fliers in their 10-6 victory with four goals. The army finally defeated the Fliers on March 27 with Apps leading the army to a 15-5 win There is no question that the Fliers was one of the best teams to ever play regularly in Exeter.

Hockey was slow in developing after the war In 1945 and 1946 there were Midget and Juvenile teams in the Ontario Minor Hockey Association The Juveniles and Midgets were guided by Bunny Ford, Murray Moore, Bill Allison, and Derry Boyle The Times remarked that "Clarence will be a big help in guiding the boys" The Juvenile players included Watson, Southcott, Tuckey, Tieman, Hayter, Wilson, Musser, Ellis, Whyte, H Brintnell, D Brintnell Hennessey, Haugh, and Hannigan The Midgets included Mickle, Hayter, Waghorn, Cann, Cudmore, Taylor Parsons, K Brintnell, and M Brintnell The local group included Clinton, Goderich, Blyth, and Exeter This minor hockey program operated under the direction of Recreation Director Art Campbell and the Recreation Committee consisting of Bob Southcott, Frank Creech, C V. Pickard, Ross Taylor, Bob Dinney, and Irwin Ford Ross Taylor managed the Midgets and Ed Hunter-Duvar the Juveniles There were no championships won in these immediate post war years although many boys were given the opportunity to play hockey The Juveniles had several noteworthy games in January 1946 A game against Blyth was "more fun than a Laurel and Hardy comedy" as the locals won 10-0 In a game on January 31, 1946 there was a melee on the ice when fans and players swarmed on the ice. The opposition was Goderich and the brawl started when Newcombe knocked Jim Hayter over. The arena operations in those days were directed by the arena committee headed by W. G. Medd, and included J. M. Southcott, C. V. Pickard, E. M. Dignan, J. Witmer, E. R. Hopper, and A. O. Elliot. W. G. Medd served on the Arena Board from 1936 to 1939.

The Cyclone League revived in 1947 and Exeter finally won the championship in that year and again in 1949. George Shaw led the team in those days. He scored four goals in the championship game against Lucan which Exeter won 10-6. That game was played in January but the ice had thawed to the point where the skates were breaking into the sawdust making it more of a slush battle than a hockey game. The 1949 team included Gerry Smith, George Shaw, Wes Ryckman, Bill Musser, Gord Cann, Doug Brintnell, Tuckey, Penhale, and Mason as well as Art Whilsmith, Tim Stire, and Jerry Lawson. Ryckman was the captain.

Hockey and sports in Exeter generally owe a great deal to Derry Boyle who contributed more time and effort over the years to hockey and other sports than any other individual. He returned to Exeter from London after the war and helped with the minor hockey program in the late 1940's. In 1950 he handled the Intermediate team. That year was an unfortunate year for hockey in every way in Exeter. There was no ice until February 1 and the team fared poorly when it did play. In March, 1950 Derry wrote his "obituary to sport of all kinds forever" in his disgust and frustration. That obituary was fortunately premature since Derry Boyle has continued to provide leadership on the Exeter sport scene to this day.

In 1953 Boyle was convener of the Cyclone League even though he had resigned this job in anger after a verbal battle with Tory Gregg. The Cyclone League that year had the largest number of entries in its history. There were ten teams in the League. Exeter had high hopes for the championship. Artificial ice had been installed in the summer of 1952 at a cost of $60,000 despite the opposition of a number of ratepayers. Indeed, one ratepayer argued that "drains were more important than artificial ice," but Council went ahead with the project and in January 1953 Mayor W. G. Cochrane opened the arena with its new ice plant. A team of all-stars including George Shaw, from the Cyclone League played Elmira. Elmira won the game. In addition, the official opening included a figure skating show. Ted Walper and the Exeter Brass Band provided the music. The Intermediate team however did not do well that year and finished in sixth place.

In 1956 the Exeter Intermediate team now known as the

Mohawks won the Intermediate "A" W.O.A.A. championship under "Red" Loader's direction, Bruce Biggart was the manager, and Lloyd Cushman the president. Council bought the players jackets and honoured the the first W.O.A.A. championsip team in Exeter since 1949. In the O.H.A. semi-finals the Exeter Mohawks were eliminated by Sundridge.

The stimulus provided by the successful 1956 season led the club directors to enter Exeter in Senior B hockey the next year. The Senior B league consisted of Wallaceburg, Strathroy, Woodstock, St. Thomas, Sarnia and Exeter. The players that year included Larry Heideman, Bill Oberle, Bill McDonald, Red Loader, Bill Wharmsby, Don Gravett, Junior Dares, Bill Franklin, Bill Hayward, Earl Barton, Doug Thiel, Jack Dwyer and Gar Baker. The experiment in Senior B hockey was not successful and in 1957 and 1958 Exeter returned to Intermediate ranks winning the Intermediate "B" W.O.A.A. Championship in 1959 losing only five out of thirty five games that year. The three top scorers in the League were Oberle, Gravett, and Loader. Also in 1959 Derry Boyle's Bantams won the W.O.A.A. Championship. Fred Lamb scored ten goals in the final game against Port Elgin which Exeter won 15 to 4.

The 1960's saw Exeter develop an expanded minor hockey program and attempt to continue Intermediate hockey. However, little success was achieved by the Intermediate team and it was disbanded in the early 1960's. In addition to the good minor hockey program a town recreational league developed resulting in more people playing hockey in Exeter than ever before. A Junior team was developed which had reasonable success throughout the 1960's. In 1963 the Exeter Midgets were All Ontario finalists losing out to Huntsville. This Midget team was the closest Exeter had come to an All Ontario championship in hockey for many years. The players included Jack Glover, Mike Cushman, Gary Parsons, Callum McPhee, John Lock, Bob Burns. Allan Thompson, Tom Glavin, Peter De Vries, Larry Stire, Bob Storie, Bob McDonald, Ron Broderick, Larry Willert, Craig Davidson. Ron Cornish, Doug Parker, Don Wright, Brian Baynham and Larry Brintnell. Lloyd Cushman was the manager and Don Gravett was the coach.

In 1962 the Bantams won the W.O.A.A. Championship and the Pee Wees won the Shamrock championship. However, the important feature of the 1960's in hockey was the minor program developed by the recreation committee and the minor hockey association. Derry Boyle has been mentioned and the Times said "We shudder to think what Exeter would be like without Derry Boyle" but other men deserve recognition. L. Cushman, Don Gravett, Larry Heideman, Alvin Willert are some but Derry kept some kind of hockey going in the days before there was very much public support for the program. Now the municipality and various organizations contribute funds and hockey is well supported.

BASEBALL

Baseball was being played in Canada as early as the 1850's. By the late 1860's and early 1870's baseball had caught on in Canada and was being played all over the country. It is, of course, impossible to say when the game was first introduced in Exeter. It is certain however, that the game was being played in the 1870's. It was popular in the village then and has remained popular ever since. Indeed, baseball is the only sport to have been played continuously in Exeter for the last one hundred years.

In some places in the 1870's baseball was considered to be ungentlemanly. It was said that, "cricket is for elders, lacrosse for younger socialites, but baseball an imported game, is just a sandlot sport usually played by undesirables." Right from the beginning, baseball was known for its "mouthiness". Nevertheless, the game's popularity spread.

In the 1870's Exeter teams played games against teams from Dashwood, Brucefield, London, Lucan, Crediton and other nearby points. One of the first recorded games was played in Exeter on May 24, 1876 between the Exeter North Stars and Dashwood. The game was played on the sports field east of the Bible Christian Church. As was common in those days the score was high with Exeter winning the contest 52 to 6. At the close of the game the clubs "adjourned to the Central", for some post-game conviviality. Games were played on the cricket grounds during the next few years. Exeter's team in the late 1870's was known as "The Beavers". In 1877 the Beavers beat the Dashwood Stars 37 to 6. Some of the players of the early years were J. Hyndman, W. Hyndman, R. Blake, J. Orr, L. Thorne, H. Elliott, R. Bissett, C. MacDonnell and J. Gill.

The sport continued to thrive in Exeter in the 1880's. In 1884 the "Clear Grit Baseball Club" with such members as Richard Eacrett, William Sanders, F. Elliott, C. Willis, J. Bawden, Frank Knight and Alf Drew had a successful year. They defeated Clinton 13 to 7, London 26 to 3, and won first prize of $35.00 at a tournament in Ailsa Craig defeating St. Marys, Lucan and Forest. The "Clear Grits" published an open challenge in the papers offering to take on all comers. Undoubtedly a little money would be involved in these challenge games.

The Exeter "Actives" baseball club was organized in 1885 with George Moir as President. Members of the club included John

McLaughlin, Peter Bawden, John Elliott, James Weekes, Alf Drew, Frank Kirk and James Pedro.

In 1886 the Club was organized as follows: President, D. Mills, Vice President, D. Davis, Treasurer, Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon, Secretary, J. Elliott, Captain, C. B. Hoskin. Executive members F. Knight, W. Andrews, James Weekes, C. Willis. The team consisted of Elliott (pitcher), Hoskins (catcher), Weekes (first base), Eacrett (second base), Bissett (third base), McDonnell (short stop), Willis (right field), Tait (centre field), McLaughlin (left field). In early July this team lost a double-header to the Lucan "Irish Nine" 20 to 16, and 10 to 7. The Exeter "Times" suggested that "Lucan had eleven men with the extra two doing the greater part of the play," but the Times also was critical of the local boys. The Times' writer suggested that the boys were not interested enough to practice, they were "natural baseballists" but were too lazy. Perhaps the editor's comments spurred the boys on because in their next game they overwhelmed Mitchell 42 to 11. "The game was watched by a good crowd, including many of the elite of the town."

Lockie Tait emerged in the late 1880's as Exeter's pitching star. In a game in 1888 against Parkhill which Exeter won 24 to 13, Tait "made no less than 17 aggravate the atmosphere". The feature play of the game was a catch by Ike Carling in centre field. Exeter played in the Huron, Middlesex, Lambton League at that time.

Tournaments for money prizes were big events in the 1880's. The Exeter boys went to Seaforth on August 8, 1889 to seek the one hundred dollar prize money. Our heroes lost all three of their games losing 19 to 14 to Brussels, 18 to 17 to Clinton and 25 to 21 to the London Travellers. The Times felt that "the grounds were too small" allowing Brussels to get "some home runs over the fence". This was certainly not fair to our heroes. Playing in Seaforth that day were Lockie Tait, pitcher, Frank Anderson, catcher, Richard Eacrett, second base, McDonnell short stop, Shipley, first base, Bissett, left field, Collins, third base, Gidley, right field, George Anderson, centre field. The stars of the game were Lockie Tait and Frank Anderson. George Anderson had come to Exeter in 1887 and provided leadership in organizing baseball during these years. He was employed as a tinsmith by Hugh Spackman and later worked for B.W.F. Beavers. In another tournament in 1889 Exeter won the Huron County Championship and the $25.00 first prize by defeating Belgrave 14 to 6, Brussels 3 to 2 and Clinton 22 to 5.

In a May 24, 1890 Tournament in Exeter the local team won the $45.00 first prize, defeating St. Marys and the Grand Trunk Railway team from London. Tait and Dolan pitched; other players were R. Eacrett, F. Anderson, G. Anderson, Hume, Bissett, McDonnell, G. Eacrett. A long remembered catch by George

Anderson was a feature of the game. Following the games there was a farmers' foot race of a half mile. The race was won by H. Tindall who took home the prize which was a Verity plough. The ball throwing contest was won by C. McDonnell and the base running contest was won by Frank Anderson.

Pick up games were common during these years. Records exist of such spontaneous games as Married Men vs Bachelors, Tories vs Grits the Band vs Unknowns. A game between the employed and the unemployed in 1894 resulted in an 8 to 6 win for the employed who had Hyndman pitching. The unemployed had an import who struck out many but the "sawed off catcher couldn't hold him". It would be interesting to know the line-ups for this game.

The late 1890's saw the games being played on the recreation grounds. The team in 1897 was called the Exeter Jubilee Stars and included Crocker, O'Neil, Spackman, Eacrett, Davidson, Stewart, Ford, Creech, Bissett. There was a decline in the calibre of ball in Exeter in the late 1890's. Indeed, there was nothing to rival the great ball played by Tait, the Andersons and the others of the 1880's until the years immediately prior to the Great War.

The Exeter Baseball Team of 1909

In the years 1910-1914 the stars to emerge were Tom Carling and Frank Boyle. Carling was a pitcher and played well enough to

be offered a spot with the Brantford Professional Team but "Good Old Tum Carlin" chose to remain in Exeter Frank Boyle sometimes was the catcher and sometimes the second baseman In addition Boyle was a leader in organizing sports in Exeter from these years to his premature death at the age of 49 in 1936 Other players included S Bawden, Hoskins, Bellwood, Steer, J Bawden, Mallott, Elliott, A Fahner, Mitchell, Heywood

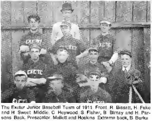
The pitching of Carling was the feature of baseball in Exeter until the spring of 1913 when he moved to Brighton There were large crowds in attendance at ball games in Exeter in those days Four hundred watched on June 29 1911 when Carling out-pitched "King" Fahner as Exeter downed their arch-rivals Crediton 7 to 6. "King" Fahner, reported the Times, "had a disconcerting smile but it did not stay with him throughout the game as it usually does". During the 1911-1912 seasons the "strong battery" of Boyle and Carling led the team On September 5, 1912 Carling threw a no-hit no-run game against Clinton Exeter scored one run to win 1 to 0 in a game played in one hour and ten minutes Reid pitched for Clinton in the game which "fast rivalled professional ball" The Exeter line-up had R Fahner, catcher Boyle, first base H Fahner, second base, Mitchell, third base, Fisher, short stop, Elliott, centre field, Bellwood right field, Heywood, left field

That was one of Carling's last efforts in Exeter but fortunately for the baseball enthusiasts a new pitcher moved to town in early 1913 to take up the place vacated by "Old Tum" M Harrington, a banker proved that he could "handle the pill with seemingly little exertion"

Baseball continued to flourish in 1913 and 1914 with a very active town league convened by Frank Boyle and with Exeter playing in the South Huron Baseball League The Town League was a church league with James Street Methodist, Main Street Methodist, Caven Presbyterian and Trivitt Memorial The latter two clubs had to amalgamate because of a shortage of players Frank Boyle was League President, W Murray, Vice President J M Southcott, Secretary, W J Heaman, Treasurer, and W S Cole, official scorer The 1913 season was officially opened with appropriate remarks by the Rev Mr McAllister Among the players involved on the various teams were Rivers, Treble, Boyle Creech, Windsor for James Street, Statham, McTaggart, Hall, Heywood for Main Street, and R Bissett, H Bissett, Senior, Dyer-Hurdon for the Trivitt-Caven Combines Heywood pitching for James Street won the opening game over Main Street 11 to 9

Exeter's entry in the South Huron League was a strong team with Boyle catching another great pitcher in the person of M Harrington The infield consisted of F Triebner at first base, either

Boyle or F. Cann at second base, R. Bissett at third base and Dr. Campbell at short stop. E. Windsor, B. Rivers, J. Chittick covered the outfield. The team was smartly turned out in cream uniforms with blue trim, blue hats and socks.



The Exeter Junior Baseball Team of 1911. Front: R. Bissett, H. Fuke and H. Sweet. Middle: C. Heywood, S. Fisher, B. Birnay and H. Parsons. Back: Preszcator, Mallett and Hoskins. Extreme back, B. Burke.

Exeter lost only one game in 1914 as Harrington led the team both from the mound and at the plate. He hit .333 and pitched outstanding games such as a 7 to 0 no-hitter over Centralia. In other games he struck out 15 as Exeter defeated Fullarton 4 to 0, he fanned 15 in an Exeter victory over Crediton. With such a season it was apparent that the South Huron League Championship should have gone to Exeter but Ailsa Craig defeated Exeter in the Championship game to win the Spalding Cup.

1914 saw the end of Exeter's second great baseball era as War came and as the Bank of Commerce transferred Harrington.

After the war and throughout the 1920's Frank "Derry" Boyle kept baseball alive and well in Exeter as he guided an expanded Town League which included the Exeter Churches as well as the Centralia Methodists, Dashwood and Crediton. There was the annual Intermediate entry in the South Huron League and a Junior team entered as well. Frank Boyle was the driving force behind both of these teams.

In 1926 Exeter won the South Huron League pennant winning 10 and losing only 2. The team that year consisted of such players as

Medd, Hind, Beavers, Lawson, Tieman, Anderson, Dignan, Taylor, Yule. In 1929 Exeter entered the Western Ontario Baseball Association with London, Strathroy, and Sarnia. Players included Medd, centre field; Cantelon, short stop; Gascho, first base; Morrison, catcher; Beavers, left field; Gettler, second base; Rannie, third base; Hind, left field; and Lawson, pitcher.

The Huron-Perth Baseball League was formed in the early 1930's with Clinton, Mitchell, Goderich, Zurich, Seaforth, Exeter, Hensall, Dashwood, Blyth, Crediton and Lucan entering teams from time to time. The League was operating with 9 teams in 1939. In that year the Creech boys, Frank and Joe along with Eugene Beavers, A. Fraser and various other players formed an Exeter entry. The 1940 Hensall entry in the Huron Perth won the Ontario Baseball Association Intermediate Championship on October 3, defeating Toronto Columbus Grads 12 to 9 in the third game of the series.

In 1947 the Huron-Perth League carried on its second post-war season in fine style with ten teams. Reeve Tuckey threw the first pitch to C. V. Pickard "who connected for a clean single over second". The members of the 1947 team were G. Robinson, Gerry Smith, Joe Creech who hit .360, Gord Farrow who hit .380, Art Campbell, Art Cann, Hennessey and Harold Holtzmann who led the team in hitting with a .412 average, Howard Holtzmann, Dinney, Moore, Harvey, Penhale and Brintnell. This team was eliminated by St. Marys.

In 1948 Elmer Bell was President of the Huron Perth Baseball League. Exeter had entries in Intermediate, Bantam, Midget, and Juvenile Baseball, in addition to both boys and girls softball teams.

The Huron-Perth entry in 1949 and 1950 made a dismal showing. Bob Russell made his Intermediate debut in 1949 at the age of fifteen and Fred Darling was a bright spot hitting .387 but the team finished last in both years. 1951, however saw a fourth place finish in the ten-team league and a victory in the play-offs to bring the Huron-Perth Championship to Exeter. The team was eliminated in the Ontario Baseball Association playoffs against Listowel. Boyle's Bantams won the Bantam Championship of Western Ontario but lost to Simcoe in the Provincial semi-finals. Bill Pollen, Terry Wade, Richard McFalls, Don Wells, Irwin Ford, Jim Russell, Bev Heywood, Pete Cowen, Chuck Parsons, Bob Taylor and Don Taylor were the players.

The Town continued to have good success in baseball throughout the early 1950's winning the Midget B, Bantam B W.O.A.A. Championships in 1952.

In 1953, the Intermediate team won the Huron Perth Championship but lost to Durham in the Ontario Baseball Association. Elson, Harold Holtzmann, Fred Darling, Mehaarg, Howard Holtzmann, Smith, L. Haugh, S. and J. Mitro were the team members. Darling led again in hitting with a .345 average. The team repeated their victory in Huron Perth play in 1954 and finished second in 1955. Loader hit .397 to lead the team in 1955. That same year the Bantams had an undefeated season to win the Western Ontario Championship under Alvin Willert's coaching but the team was eliminated from Provincial play because Jim McDonald had lost his Proof of Age. The Times Advocate was very critical saying that "sport has been run in a haphazard fashion for several years", the editor criticized the "rule dodging" and careless direction of sport. That small error probably deprived Exeter of a Provincial Baseball Championship. Most of the boys however did play on a Provincial Championship team the following year. In 1956 Gravett and Willert directed the Midgets to the town's very first Ontario Baseball Championship. "A clutch victory over Caledonia in the final game" gave Exeter the Championship. Jim Russell and Fred Hunter pitched. B. Glover, C. Blommaert, D. Kelson, D. Sillery, Jim Hennessey, Jim McDonald, A. Jackson and A. Rundle were members of the team.

Exeter continued to enter a team in the Huron-Perth League until the mid-1960's with the 1962 and 1963 years being the last years in which the team performed well. In 1962 the team won the Huron-Perth eliminating Listowel in a hard fought series. Embarrassment, followed however, in the Ontario Baseball Association as the team lost to Campbellville 5 to 0 and 18 to 0 in one of the worst beatings the Exeter Intermediate team suffered in some years. Campbellville however had an exceptionally outstanding Intermediate team. Among the leading hitters on the team were Wright with .380, Johnson .368, Bogart .357, Wooden .465, Strang .345, Russell .291. Other players included Little, MacNaughton, Boyle, Taylor, Pfaff, McFalls, Nagle, Boyne, McKinnon, Horton, Kyle and Carey. The same team did reasonably well in 1963 winning the Huron-Perth but losing to Petrolia in the Provincial playoffs.

Baseball gradually diminished in the next few years with the last part of the 1960's seeing softball dominating the local ball park. The early 1970's have seen some effort in the revival of baseball. As with hockey credit must go to various individuals for carrying on the sport of baseball over some of the lean periods. Names like Willert, Boyle, Gravett, Fairbairn, and others deserve recognition.

BASKETBALL

In the year 1891, a Canadian Dr. James Naismith from Almonte, Ontario developed a new game while teaching at Springfield, Mass. He named the game basketball since it consisted of throwing a round football through half bushel peach baskets.

The game spread to Canada in the 1890's reaching Exeter in 1899 In that year "the citizens of Exeter responded largely to the invitation of Principal Boyd to attend the basketball game at the school grounds" For the first time basketball was played in Exeter and the Times found it to be a "quite unique and interesting" game As the band played the villagers watched Miss Nettie Walters, Miss Robinson, Miss L Hooper, Miss E Gill and other young ladies in their long skirts and bloomers run up and down the grounds trying to get the ball into baskets fixed to poles

It was to be 38 years before the next game of basketball was played in Exeter This time it was played in the gym at the arena in December, 1937 and again it was a school activity The Exeter team had been formed by Mr A Fawcett, one of the teachers in the local school, and the Times Advocate said that Fawcett was to be "commended for his work in instructing the high school boys in the game" Joe Creech, Ray Creech, Ray Waghorn, Les Coates, Bob Dinney, Murray Moore, Max Harness and Ted Buswell "made a very creditable showing against a much more experienced and larger" St Marys team which won 32 to 19

Most basketball since 1937 has been played at the high school first in the arena gymnasium and then in the new district school gym after 1950 and presently in the new large gymnasium at the enlarged school There was, however, a brief period during which Exeter shone brightly in Ontario Basketball Association play The first entry was an Intermediate team in 1947 with H Davis, D Davies, J Rether, A Campbell, G Rether, B Davis, S Green, G Robertson, H Hannigan, R Nicol, J Hennessey

In 1950 a Junior Basketball team, The Maroons, playing in the arena gym brought Exeter its first and only All Ontario Basketball Championship The players raised money to buy uniforms and equipment, they worked hard under Gord Farrow's coaching The dedication paid off with a 116 to 57 victory over Brampton in the 2 game series "The championship was the climax to an impressive string of victories" The players were John Rether, Murray May, Bill O Brien, Fred Dobbs, Uel Schroeder, G Cann R Vandenbusshe George Dobbs G Schroeder The champions were honoured at a banquet presented by the Kinsmen Club John Metras was the guest speaker The team operated for the next year or two but the difficulties involved in playing in the arena gym where spectators could not be accommodated were too great to overcome Without fans paying an admission fee there was no money and without funds the team was unable to carry on Apparently arrangements could not be made to use the gym in the new high school so the team folded It was unfortunate that junior and intermediate basketball could not have been carried on in Exeter.

especially after it had such an auspicious beginning.

Basketball continued to be played at the high school with both boys and girls teams having a significant measure of success from 1947 to the early 1960's. Space hardly permits a detailed recounting of the history of high school sport, consequently only a brief mention is made of high school basketball. The local school placed teams in the W.O.S.S.A. finals frequently during this period. In 1949 the boys lost by 2 points to Tillsonburg in the W.O.S.S.A. final; the girls had lost in 1948 in the final. In 1950 however, both the senior boys coached by Glen Mickle and the senior girls coached by Lauretta Siegner won W.O.S.S.A. championships.

Throughout the early 1950's South Huron teams won various W.O.S.S.A. championships. The senior girls' team won 23 games in a row in 1952-53 winning the W.O.S.S.A. championship both years. In the midst of several years of highly successful basketball teams at the school the Times Advocate editorially told the high school to stop playing basketball. It was detrimental to hockey! The school has continued to play basketball. In 1955 all four teams, junior and senior boys and girls won championships. South Huron teams continued to be successful until the 1960's. For example in 1962, the junior girls lost only one game all year - the W.O.S.S.A. final.

CRICKET

This very English game was naturally enough played in Exeter in the very early years. The Cricket Grounds were located east of the James Street Church on property owned by Snell. The first record of an organized club dates from 1874 although it would be a safe assumption to suggest that the sport was played in the village in the years before that. In 1874, however, a club organized. E. W. Strathy was President and W. Bissett, Treasurer. W. Hodgson was Vice President. The Players in 1874 included A. MacDonnell, H. White, R. Bissett, A. Sheere, H. Adams, M. C. Moscrys, R. Adams, T. Horn, T. Treble, G. Elliott. The Exeter club played St. Marys in their first match in 1874 winning 110 to 108 with Moscrys making 50 runs. The Times admired the "agile movements of the cricketers as they deftly wield with willow".

The game was played over the next 25 years with Exeter teams playing matches against various London teams including the famous "Pickwicks", and teams from neighbouring towns such as Clinton. In August, 1889 Exeter defeated Clinton 106 to 69. The Times remarked that "the Clinton team appeared to be afraid of the Exeter bowlers' fierce balls". The players in 1889 included I. R. Carling, W. E. Harding, F. Elliott, Begg, Manson, H. K. Hyndman, Goodman and Ed. Bissett, J. Elliott and C. MacDonnell.

During the 1890's the club continued to exist; Dr. Lutz served as President. The old grounds continued to be used with a rental being paid to the owner, Mr. Snell. There is little evidence to indicate that the game was played in Exetar after the turn of the century. Other sports became increasingly popular.

LACROSSE

The National Game of Canada was played in Exeter during the last 25 years of the 19th century and the first few years of the 20th century. In 1886 the Lacrosse Club's executive consisted of Dr. Rollins (President), N. Dyer-Hurdon (Vice President), A. Snell (Captain), B. S. O'Neill (Secretary Treasurer), D. Hooper, P. Bawden, J. Fairbairn, H. Samwell. In some years the Exeter team was entered in a league, for example, in 1897 Exeter, Clinton, Goderich, Wingham, Lucknow and Kincardine formed a league. In 1899 a junior team known as the Exeter Nationals had a very successful year losing only one game. Fred Bissett, M. Vincent, Senior and Poplestone were some of the players in the 1890's. Pick-up games in the village were often very rough. In 1897 the Grits and Tories played to a 4 - all tie in a very rough game. Both F. Bissett and M. Vincent had severe injuries.

The game was played on into the 20th century with the Club being called the "Victorias". W. M. Martin, Rus Southcott, Herb Ford, Ike Bissett are cited as being among the stars of the early years of the century. Leadership for the sport came from N. Dyer-Hurdon, J. G. Stanbury, R. Knight, Wm J. Heaman, J. Davis, Mac Vincent and others.

The game gradually died out in Exeter and has not been played since the early years of the century.

TENNIS

In the late 1890's and early 1900's a Tennis Club existed in Exeter. The Rev. Ten Eyck, R.C.C. Tremaine, J. G. Stanbury, W. A. Millyard, G. A. Ferguson were some of the members. For exercise the club members rode their bicycles to Hensall every Saturday afternoon. The location of the tennis courts is not clear. Some tennis was played sporadically during the first few decades of this century but the sport did not flourish in Exeter.

BADMINTON

Badminton clubs have existed in Exeter from time to time since the 1930's. Audrey Pooley while living in Stratford won the Ontario Junior Badminton Championship and was runner-up in the All Canadian tournament in 1955. In 1956 Bev Sturgis won the Senior W.O.S.S.A. Championship. There is little else of note as far as badminton is concerned. It has been played in the arena gym and the high school gym over the years.

CROQUET

This was a popular "sport" in the late 1800's. Challenge matches between Exeter and neighbouring towns were common For example, in July, 1897 Exeter defeated Clinton 6 to 2 in a match played on Mr Gidley's lawn

CHECKERS

Inter-town matches were common in the 1890's The great checker players of the 1890's were men such as Alf Walters J H Hyndman, C Prouty, J Walters, R Terry, T Oke Of course almost everybody played checkers in various spots along Main Street Alf Walters' store was a favourite spot, as was the old Carling store

BILLIARDS

This "sport" did not have much success in Exeter until the late 1930's when pool tables were finally allowed in Exeter As early as 1876 Council had refused permission to set up tables Poolrooms, said the Times, were "loathesome" places and "a decided evil" which the village could do without The village did not need the "damning influence of the billiard room" where "wives are forgotten and neglected, children are forsaken and parents despised for the ever clanging ball and cue" The Times felt that "we have at the present time evils sufficient to overcome without taking into the fold this, another giant of evil"

This was a reflection of Exeter's attitude to poolrooms over the years Every time a request for permission to set up pool tables came before Council it was denied The village was saved again in 1926 when the ratepayers voted no The question of a poolroom had fallen "like a bomb" at a December, 1925 nomination meeting but Exeter was saved from sin again

However, despite the protestations of the pious, Council, upon the advice of its solicitor, granted a licence for a poolroom in the late 1930's The town has however, survived this incursion of sin

GOLF –

In 1928 Earl Parsons laid out a golf course on the river lands north of the fair grounds Only boys were allowed to play The operation was short-lived, possibly only one summer Exeter golf enthusiasts during the next several decades played at Grand Bend until the two local courses were opened in recent years

CURLING

The "roaring game" was undoubtedly introduced in Exeter during the time of the Bawden rink The earliest note about curling occurred in 1906 In 1911 such men as W W Taman, G E Anderson, S Sweet, J H Grieve, James Taylor, E Jones, and A Taylor were among the curlers of the village From 1912 to the 1920's the Dome Rink was the site of curling in Exeter and in the 1950's curling was revived in the arena In 1960 the sport had become so popular that a curling rink was built The sport is now a regular winter pastime for many local people

VOLLEYBALL

This sport had a brief period as an organized community sport in the 1930's when Harry Lewis and S B Taylor formed a club in the arena gym Almost all volleyball since then has been played as a high school sport

LAWN BOWLING

The gentlemanly sport of bowling began in Exeter in May, 1904 when a Bowling Club was organized The officers were as follows Rev Perkins, Honorary President, L H Dickson, President, B S O'Neil, Vice President, J G Stanbury, Secretary Treasurer, Rev Martin, Chaplain, the Committee consisted of N Dyer-Hurdon J Davis, A W Horne, R B Samuel, and W J Heaman The club played on the Anglican Rectory lawn which by July, 1904 was reported to have been "in splendid condition" The first rinks from Exeter to enter the Western Ontario Lawn Bowling Tournament in London in these early years were those consisting of W H Leavitt, I R Carling, L H Dickson, W J Heaman (skip) and E J Christie, C B Snell, Rev Collins, and W W Taman (skip)

Exeter Bowling 1914

In 1911 Lawn Bowling became a major sport in Exeter In that year the present greens were opened and the first of the large annual invitational tournaments was held The President of the 1911 club was W J Heaman Other officers included W D Clarke, R N Creech N Dyer-Hurdon, Rev D W Collins, J G Stanbury, I R Carling, J A Stewart, S G Bawden and W W Taman Bawden donated a trophy in that year to be awarded annually to the winning rink in the Tournament In that year of 1911 R G Seldon and W W Taman won the Ontario Doubles Championship at Hamilton

In the years following, large numbers of bowlers came to Exeter to take part in the annual tournament In 1912 over 200 bowlers came to Exeter in August for the three-day tournament. The Advocate contained the following item

> "The green is in excellent condition and is decorated with flags and bunting A tent is on the ground and refreshments are provided. Streamers decorate Main Street The town is alive with autos"

The Bawden trophy was won that year by a Hensall rink and was in 1913 lost in the big fire which destroyed a good part of Hensall's Main Street The trophy was replaced and in 1913 was won by a Goderich rink Exeter enjoyed a great time each year when the Tournament was staged As one local poet put it in 1913

"Hurrah! The Bowling Tournament
That great and looked for day
Has dawned and united brethren
Are lined on the green to play
That exciting game of Bowling,
"Bowling on the Green"
No truer words were ever sung
Than that song Capt Hurdon sings"

By 1917 Exeter was reputed to have the finest "green" in Western Ontario The great bowlers of the period included R G Seldon, W W Taman, J A Stewart, W D Clarke C B Snell, R N Creech, N J Dore, T Elliott The "Big Four Rink" consisting of Seldon, Clarke Taman Stewart won more tournaments than any other rink in Western Ontario Another successful rink consisted of R N Creech, W E Sanders, R W Fuke, and W J Heaman The rink won the London Free Press Trophy in 1922 In 1917 a "country woman" criticized bowling She wrote

> "Last week a report of the annual bowling tournament was given in your paper Several farmers have been commenting on these affairs and wondering how it is these men can see no better way to use their time than to bowl when men are needed to take off the crops I know instances where women are working indoors and out labouring beyond their strength at men's work If some of these bowlers would give their surplus time in the field instead of the women they would be doing more for their country than at present Why send to other places for farm helpers when there are so many sporting on the green in our own town? If farm labour is too much for their muscle perhaps they might come to the country in their motor cars in the evening and do some of the chores that fall to the women's lot in harvest time One would judge from the number of motors on Main Street during the tournament that this was the most prosperous time in our country's history We are told we must prepare for a crisis must we meet it in motors?"

The letter reflects the town-country hostility which emerges from time to time

The Annual Exeter Tournament remained an important event through the 1920's and 1930's Bowling remained popular through the decades and in 1946 the club house was erected The sport still attracts many, and summer evenings still see activity on the well kept green on Exeter's Main Street

TRACK AND FIELD

One can go back to Exeter's early days for examples of "track events" In the 1860's and subsequent decades challenge foot races were common For example, in 1878 James Oke and W Tait, the hostler at the Central Hotel ran a race for a small bet from the Bible Christian Church to the Hotel Oke won and collected the bet T Oke and W Lyne ran 75 yards for $25 00 in 1886, the latter won In 1897 Will Folland beat Tom Oke for $25 00 and the racing championship of Exeter "Squire" Leathorn and Sam Stanlake ran 100 yard races for $5.00 in the 1890's Leathorn usually won Such events provided amusement for the village, and opportunities for small wagers

Real track and field activities, however, did not occur until the high school staged field days and participated in Huron County Amateur Athletic Association meets which began in 1928 A recounting of the school track and field activities will be left to someone else A history of athletic activities at the high school is beyond the space of this book

Reference should be made however to Gordon Pirie's attempt in the mid 1950's to break the three mile world record Pirie made this attempt on the high school track He failed to set a new mark but he did come close to the two mile record Recreation Director Doug Smith and Mayor Pooley were in charge of the arrangements and Ed Blake of C K N X radio was Master of Ceremonies

Races and similar events were held on holidays such as May 24 and Dominion Day Mention of these activities has been made elsewhere

QUOITS

This game was popular in Exeter during the 19th century and early 1900's The game involved tossing a six to eight pound iron ring some eighteen yards The object was to have the ring drop on a peg placed in the ground or at least come close to the peg Groups representing sections of the village played games One such match occurred between "Market Square" and Andrew Street The latter team won 61 to 46 The players on the Andrew Street team were J Elliott, A Sheere, C Snell, F Collins, the Market Square boys were J McLaughlin, H Harding, J Leavitt and A Dare

Inter-town competition developed as well and in August 1904 Exeter played Seaforth on the grounds opposite the flour mill Ed

Treble, James Grieve, W. J. Bishop and T. Boyle defeated Seaforth 114 to 92. A return match the following week was won by Seaforth 91 to 88.

SHOOTING MATCHES AND HUNTING

Recreation and competition involving guns and shooting has been popular in Exeter from the very early days down to the present. Of course, the game is virtually all gone now and hunting in the area now is, fortunately some would say, a declining activity. However, game remained fairly plentiful throughout the last decades of the 19th century and during the early years of the present century. The following reflects the abundance of game in the past. This account refers to the 1850's and 1860's:

> "Occasionally a quail and her family were brought home from the forest, placed in a wooden cage, fed and cared for, the housewife simply reaching in and taking out a fine bird when she desired to make a quail pie. One or two wild turkeys were usually shot in the swamp each fall. . . Wild geese were more easily procured. Although there were wild ducks, people seldom bothered with these, tame ones being plentiful everywhere. There were also many beautiful pheasants in the woods but these were seldom shot.
>
> Many black squirrels were secured in the autumn and one of these prepared as one prepares chicken with dressing and roasted, made a fine dish. Black bears and deer were numerous in the forests. . . ."

In the 1870's and 1880's great flocks of geese, ducks, plover, partridge, quail and woodcock were reported. Deer was plentiful. For example in October, 1884 Wes Bissett and his brother shot three deer in the sand hills, each weighing over two hundred pounds dressed. In those years the deer season in Huron extended from October 1 to December 15 and the duck season from August 15 to January 1. The Lake Smith area and the Pinery area attracted Exeter hunters. Indeed in the 1890's the Lake Smith Shooting Club included several "Exeterites". Even the occasional bear could be seen as late as the 1880's. In October 1884 a bear was reported in Stephen Township, one-half mile south of Exeter. Naturally enough a hunt was organized to seek out the bear. Indeed, any strange animal immediately resulted in someone wanting to shoot it. This happened in June, 1877 when Eli Snell came upon a weird creature in the "wilds of Stephen Township" two miles west of Exeter. Snell came upon the animal which had a five foot wing spread, a head resembling a fox and a pouch at its side for carrying its young. The animal flew away, however, before Snell could shoot it. The incident was reported to the Times whose knowledgeable editor pronounced it to be a "Kalong" which was reported to have a wing spread of five feet and was a native of Java. It was not reported again so presumably hunters did not come across it again.

By the 1920's people were concerned about the depletion of wild life and it was proposed that the one thousand acre block in Stephen Township between the 5th and 6th Concessions and Huron Street and the Lake Road become a game preserve. At the present time most of the species of wild life common to this area seventy or eighty years ago are now gone. Little cover remains as agriculture becomes increasingly intensive. It would seem sensible now that hunting no longer be permitted in the area.

Shooting matches were a popular activity for hunters and for those who just liked to shoot guns. Reports of these matches appeared from the 1870's on. In 1877 two teams staged a match with the losers to buy an oyster supper at the Central Hotel. The team consisting of A Sheere, A. Bissett, J. Westcott, John Heywood, James Oke, John Marshall and Tom Snell had to buy the meal "prepared in the usual good style of the house" for John Woods, Tom Bissett, John Sanders, E. Bissett, S. Fairbairn, F. W. Simpson and A. Lake. In the match each man had ten pigeons, the rules called for an eight yard width and a twenty-one yard rise.

Individual shooting matches were common. In 1887, for example, Tom Bissett took $39.00 from W. E. Sanders in two matches. In the 1880's the Exeter Gun Club was established and competitions for medals were held. A man would keep the medal if he won it three times. In the 1890's such men as James Bissett, I. Handford, George Anderson, N. Dyer-Hurdon, E. Bissett, F. Collins, and A. Loadman held weekly shoots for medals. The Exeter Gun Club existed until fairly recent years although its activities were considerably reduced from those of early years.

FOOTBALL

Football (presumably soccer) was played in Exeter from the 1880's to the years just before World War One. Games were infrequent in most years although in 1891 the club was quite active. In one game against Brucefield, the contest was tied one each but the Times reported sadly "Brucefield had better uniforms". In the 1890's the Exeter Beavers and the Francistown Corncobs played some gruelling matches. The worst loss recorded came in 1886 when Seaforth defeated the home town 7 to 0. The games were apparently played on the old race track grounds.

Rugby football appeared in Exeter at the high school in the 1940's and has become a popular fall sport. But as was noted previously no attempt will be made here to deal with high school sport. Soccer has had little interest in Exeter during the past seventy years although some attempts to revive the sport have occurred at the school.

HORSE RACING

This has been a popular sport in Exeter since the very early days. In the 1870's the Exeter Driving Park Association was promoting races in the Exeter Driving Park which had been developed on property bought from Eldred Drew in 1875. On June 30 and July 1, 1876 a large meet was held. There also had been a large fall meet on September 15 and 16, 1875. There were excursion trains into Exeter on both days that summer. The Association set one thousand dollars in prizes. There were 2500 persons in attendance, 400 sitting in the grandstand. The track was considered to be "one of the best half-mile tracks in the province". There were some well-known horsemen of the area with entries including C. Handford's "Lady Beacon"; J. Rattenbury's "Brucefield Girl", MacDonald's "Matilda". There were running races and trotting races. Races were held in the Driving Park in the summer and fall throughout the 1870's. The location of this race course is uncertain but it seems to have been on the west side of the village.

Some of the famous horses owned in Exeter in the early years included Dr. Hutchinson's "Galt Reporter", Thomas Carling's "Electricity", William Hawkshaw's "Protection" and S. Grigg's "Bay Warrior". In addition to the regular race meets challenge races between local gentry were common. Frequently the streets were used for these races.

In January or February of 1897 the Exeter Turf Club leased twenty acres from Messrs Dow and Tennant for a race track and recreation grounds. This, of course, is the present track and fairgrounds area. The Exeter Turf Club staged important race meets for the next fifty years or more. During the 1940's men like Jack Morrissey, Tom Yearley, Frank Taylor, Preston Dearing, Garnet Flynn, Harry Beaver and others promoted the interests of the Turf Club. In 1946 eight thousand dollars was spent on the grounds. A new grandstand, band stand, horse barn, track, and baseball diamond were built with this money, which came from the village, the Agricultural Society, the Lions Club and from public subscriptions. The 1946 meet was the first since 1941. Three thousand people saw Frank Taylor's Midnight Express driven by Tom Yearley finish in the money. Tom Yearley's Lee Gratton did not finish in the money that year but a few years later Yearley had a big winner in Argyle Gratton. Yearley lost another fine horse, Amber Gratton in the fire which destroyed the horse barn in the 1950's, five other horses also burned to death.

The local track still echoes with the pounding hooves of the pacers and trotters although the roar of the crowd is missing since all of the running there involves training only. Races have been very infrequent during the past fifteen years.

Other sports such as broomball, horseshoes, figure skating, and recreational skating and bowling have involved many participants as have all the sports mentioned here. Sports in Exeter over the years have had periods of ups and downs. For most of its history organization of sport depended on individuals as we noted. In the 1940's however, Exeter appointed a Recreation Director. A teacher at the high school Art Campbell shared his time between the high school and the recreation activity of the town. Doug Smith was the first full-time Recreation Director. He was followed by Larry Heideman, Don Gravett and Alvin Willert. The present arena is the sixth to serve the town and the only one to be operated by the Municipality. It has been managed by such men as Ralph Batten, Derry Boyle and Alvin Willert.

The guiding body for the recreational activities that are sponsored by the town is the Recreation Council or more properly termed R.A.P. Committee which administers the park facilities, arena, and recreation program. Sports and related activities, then, have been important social functions in Exeter since the beginning of the settlement and have involved people from all segments of the community.

chapter 7

Churches

Over the years Exeter has had a very large representation of the various denominations of the Christian religion. The list includes the Church of England, Presbyterian, Methodist, Bible Christian, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Pentecostal, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist, Churches of Dutch origin, Mennonite, and others. Whether reports of Exeter's wickedness reached the various church leaders and missionaries "as the roar of distant thunder" and thus caused such an influx of clergy and churches is not known. Perhaps the people of the area were more amenable than some to the ministrations of the clergy of a variety of churches. In any case it would be difficult to find a community of comparable size with the variety of churches to choose from.

Basically, however, the church history of Exeter is dominated by four denominations. The Bible Christian Society and the Methodist Church claimed the adherence of a majority of the local population; this is understandable since Devonshire was the birthplace of the Bible Christian movement and was also a strong Methodist area. Most of those who were not Bible Christians or Methodists were Anglicans or Presbyterians.

The Bible Christian Society had its origins in Devonshire in 1815. Its founder was William O. O'Brien, a Methodist preacher. In 1831 an act of parliament gave legal status to the society which became known as the Bible Christian Church. This church came to the Exeter area in 1852 when the first church was built at what was then known as Adams Settlement or Ebenezer. The site is marked by a cairn located one and one-quarter miles east of Exeter on Huron Street. Prior to the erection of this church the first Bible Christian services had been conducted by the Rev. Mr. R. Hurly in the home of Mr. James Pickard.

JAMES ST. METHODIST CHURCH,
EXETER, ONT.

James Street Methodist Church about 1885

On February 24, 1856 the first Bible Christian Church in Exeter was dedicated on the site now occupied by the Town of Exeter Clerk's office. This building later became Farmer Brothers' Liquor Store. Among the first members of this church were James Pickard and his wife, Richard and Ann Welsh, James and Fannie Bissett, Richard and Dorothy Handford, Robert and Margaret Frayne, Henry and Elizabeth Westcott, and John and Ann Jones. The first minister to serve the church was John Edwards "a very godly man whose knees it was reported were callous from much praying". After he retired Edwards remained in the community staying in the May home south of the village. Included in the Exeter circuit at this time were Bethesda, Providence, Eden, Bethel, Centralia, Crediton, and Dashwood. Edwards had two assistants to help him serve this circuit, these junior ministers were J. Webster and J. Tucker. The parsonage stood on Huron Street and was occupied in recent years by Mr. and Mrs. Waghorn. It was torn down a few years ago and may have been the second oldest house in the town at the time of its demolition.

In 1862 the present Exeter United Church was erected as a Bible Christian Church. James Pickard's generosity was primarily responsible for the church since he personally guaranteed the cost of the building and provided a home free of charge for the junior ministers. By the 1860's the Exeter circuit had grown to twelve preaching places. A large number of clergymen served the circuit, some of the more notable being the Rev. G. Webber and Dr. Pascoe.

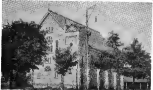
In 1884 the Methodist Church came into existence in Canada as a result of a union of various Methodist bodies including the Wesleyan Methodist and the Bible Christian Church. In Exeter ninety-four members of the congregation supported the union and nineteen opposed the move. It was reported that some of the dissenters left the church and joined the Salvation Army. Exeter, then, had two Methodist churches and when the Main Street Methodist Church burned in 1895 an attempt was made to unite the two congregations. The effort was unsuccessful but apparently a number of Main Street people who opposed rebuilding did join the James Street congregation at the time. In 1886 the parsonage on Albert Street was completed but in recent years this house was sold and a new church house erected.

The Main Street congregation did eventually merge with the James Street congregation and the Main Street Church was sold to the Pentecostal Church. This new congregation is officially known as the Exeter United Church and is Exeter's largest church. The United Church building, has then, gone through several denominational phases beginning as a Bible Christian Church,

becoming a Methodist Church, then the James Street United Church and now the Exeter United Church.

The first Wesleyan Methodist Church was built in the 1850's on a site overlooking the river on Church Street. The church was located immediately west of the Elliott home on the higher ground. The minister at the time of the church's construction was the Rev. William Chapman. The Exeter congregation from 1844 to 1863 was part of the Devonshire circuit which included the area between Lucan and Clinton. After 1863 the Exeter circuit included Exeter, Fairfield, Lucan, Atkinson's, Farmsville, Lamport's and other points. As with the Bible Christian circuit there were a very large number of preachers serving the circuit over the years.

In 1869 the Methodists built a new church on the site of the present Pentecostal Church. Unfortunately this structure burned to the ground in March, 1895. The minister at the time was the Rev.



Main Street Methodist Church about 1900

H. W. Locke whose eloquence from the pulpit was widely appreciated and was reflected in the growing congregation. Considerable discussion followed the fire regarding a union with the James Street congregation. The Main Street people proposed a union conditional upon the construction of a new church "to be built within one year on a central location between the present sites". The James Street Board felt that the immediate erection of a new church would require "the sacrifice of too much of the material resources and moral influences of the two churches". The James Street Board proposed an amalgamation of the two congregations and the use of the James Street Church. The Board further proposed that consideration be given in the future to the construction of a new church This proposal was completely rejected by the Main Street congregation who began immediately to plan for the rebuilding of the church The church was rebuilt and served the congregation during the remaining Methodist years and during the years as Main Street United Church Union of the two United churches resulted in the eventual sale of the church to the Pentecostal people of Exeter

Both Bible Christian and Methodist clergy appeared very early in Exeter's history, however, it is probable that the first clergyman who "ever preached a sermon in this locality" was the Rev H C Cooper the first Church of England priest to work in the Exeter area Evidently Cooper held services in Stephen Township's first school which was on Lot 15 on the London Road The services held there would be part of the Church's attempt to bring the benefits of religion to the area when it was still very primitive A priest like Cooper would serve a large area In Cooper's case he served the area from Exeter to Clinton during the 1840's Cooper's services in the Stephen school were the first Anglican services in the vicinity of Exeter Cooper undoubtedly conducted many of the marriage services in the area because of the special legal status of the Church of England Among other early priests in the area were Archibald Lampman, the father of the poet and Edward Sullivan

After 1859 the history of the Church of England in Exeter became continuous On April 26, 1859 the first vestry meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Rev Stearne Tighe The meeting was held in the Exeter Union School on Andrew Street Anglican services were held in the school and in the Orange Hall until 1861 when the first Anglican Church was opened for services The Church was known as Christ Church and was located on Victoria Street near the house presently owned by P F H Connon The rectory was on the north-east corner of Victoria and William The prominent laymen involved with the establishment of the church in Exeter were Dr Hyndman, Will Case, George Case, Joseph Acheson and Henry Macklin

By 1864 the Church was still unfinished and still not paid for and on March 28, Thomas Trivitt was given authority to notify "the defaulters in payment of their subscriptions towards the funds for finishing the church that the money was required immediately" Also in 1864 some attempt was made to secure ground for a cemetery In that year Exeter's pioneer James Willis died he had requested that he be buried in consecrated ground but was interred in the secular cemetery It would appear that there never was a parish cemetery in Exeter

By 1869 average attendance at services was one hundred and eighteen The church property by this time included the church, rectory, shed and stable Throughout the 1870's the parish was plagued by financial difficulties Isaac Carling, B V Elliott and the Cases led the parish in improving the financial situation Among the clergy during the years were George Keys, Francis Ryan and Isaac Barr These clergy served St Pauls Hensall and St Patricks, Saintsbury as well as Exeter

In 1885 S J Robinson arrived as rector, he reported that "the church house, fence, and other property were in a wretched state of repair A rotting wooden fence enclosed a wilderness of weeds and undergrowth The Sunday School with seventeen pupils and three teachers was the only organization in the parish" Parish finances were poor Despite the poor finances plans for a new church were started in 1887 The new church was built and on the Third Sunday in Advent, 1888 the last service was held in Christ Church The rector recorded his impressions of the event

> "In the evening many people sadly gathered up their books and said goodbye to the poor old walls that had sheltered them as worshippers for a quarter of a century Monday the bell came down from the tower It had tolled first for John Dew in the tower it now left and performed the same office in its new home for his brother Alfred Dew in February, 1889 Never handsome, never comfortable, never churchly in appearance yet still it was hallowed by the prayers of a generation To what unworthy uses in a degenerate and irreverent age the old gallery and floors may be put one cannot conjecture It never had a chancel and for this omission we thank God"

As the Rev H Seegmiller, whom we must acknowledge as the source of this history of the Church of England in Exeter, remarked, "one wonders what Robinson would have thought had he been aware of the use to which the building was put" For the old church was moved a short distance to the east and was used for almost fifty years as an exhibit building for the fair It came to be called the "Crystal Palace" In 1934 it was purchased and torn down by Cliff Brintnell So Trivitt Memorial Church replaced the old Christ Church

> "For the beginning of this we must go back a few years to the appointment of S F Robinson who came right out of Huron College to the parish at the age of 31 years A warm friendship grew up between he and Trivitt who was then over 70 years of age Mr Trivitt was a medium-sized man who had inherited an ample fortune which he looked after carefully by sound investments and simple personal habits Evidently he had three main interests — birds, flowers and theology An aviary filled with rare birds showed his taste for ornithology His extensive greenhouse kept his friends well supplied with flowers He was a scholarly man, well read theologically, and he held very decided opinions on both politics and religion Robinson the new clergyman, held the view that "the people of Canada need only to be shown what the Church of England is, to make a wonderful

revival". With this Thomas Trivitt agreed. This probably explains why Trivitt Memorial was built on such a grandiose scale.

Thomas Trivitt

Trivitt was born in Taunton, Deane, Somerset, England in 1813. He married, in 1848, a lady from Norfolk County and the same year emigrated to Upper Canada where he settled on the present site of Centralia. Becoming the first Clerk of the Township of Stephen, he held that office for several years. In 1852, when the Fifth Division Court for the County of Huron was organized at Centralia, he became its Clerk. The Court was later moved to Exeter but he retained the post. In 1857 he was named a Justice of the Peace. Through his enterprise and liberality in connection with the building of the London, Huron and Bruce Division of the Great Western Railway, many permanent advantages were secured for Centralia which became a village in 1868.

Although Robinson makes the idea of a new church in Exeter sound like his idea, it must have been discussed at some length before any official announcement was made.

After the Good Friday service of 1887 Robinson informs us he met with the Wardens, Denovan and Spackman, in the latter's office. There he outlined the idea for a new church, "the plan being proposed by the Rector, and warmly seconded by the Wardens". Mr. Denovan mentioned the subject to Mrs. Trivitt and "that faithful friend of the church in the parish enlisted the sympathy of her husband. A firm and definite plan was soon arranged by which Mr. Trivitt offered to become the donor of a new church in Exeter." On the 5th of May Bishop Baldwin was at Trivitt's home and gave his consent to the plan.

At a Vestry Meeting called for the 9th of May, Robinson, as Chairman, read the "following handsome offer" which Trivitt himself had written: Thomas Trivitt, Esquire, proposes to the Churchwardens and congregation of Christ Church, Exeter, and to the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Huron, that he will erect on the Hamlin Lot, Main Street, to be deeded to the said Incorporated Synod, a substantial and commodious new church at the minimum cost of at least $5,000, any outlay beyond this amount to be entirely at his own option. The size and style of architecture to be decided upon by a building committee composed of the Bishop, the Incumbent, the two Churchwardens, and the Donor, assisted by the advice of competent architects, as well as of the congregation occasionally called together by vestry meetings for that purpose (the said Churchwardens and congregation undertaking to provide the said site, properly drained and prepared for building and also everything necessarily required within said church when built, such as heating, lighting, seating, etc, together with the appropriate church organ) when being guaranteed the following conditions viz — First that the said Church for all time be called and known as "The Trivitt Memorial Church" — and second that the Donor be allowed to have permanently placed within said Church as soon as consecrated, and at any spot he may choose, either a window or mural tablet with this inscription, or its equivalent, viz

> 'This Church was erected by Thomas and Elizabeth Trivitt as a grateful memorial of the many Divine favours conferred upon them, and was consecrated for the worship and service of God by the Right Rev'd Maurice Scollard Baldwin, D D , Lord Bishop of Huron, on the day of A D 188

To this was attached in the Bishop's own handwriting these words

> "May 5th 1887 — I heartily approve of the above and trust that God's blessing may rest upon the undertaking "

A resolution sponsored by A A C Denovan and B S O'Neil was passed unanimously by those attending the meeting It said

> that we, having heard Mr Trivitt's proposition to erect a church on the Hamlin lot Main Street Exeter, do hereby heartily approve of and accept the same and we also do hereby guarantee that all the conditions shall be fully carried out in every particular

A second resolution proposed by B V Elliott and George Kemp also passed without dissent

> that we present our hearty thanks to Mr Trivitt for his very generous offer to erect a new church and that we will do our utmost to carry to completion the said church in a manner worthy of so munificent a donation

The Wardens were empowered to begin negotiations for the site of the new building The meeting closed with the singing of the Doxology led by Mrs Kemp and by prayers by the Rector

The Wardens were successful in obtaining from Thomas Hamlin two lots, each 50 feet wide north of Gidley Street An Exeter man, Welsh, was given the contract for draining and excavating the land On this property a street 50 feet wide was opened between Main and Andrew Streets The Wardens were to interview the Town Council to see if that body would be willing to accept "Baldwin Street" and keep it in repair

On April 2nd, 1888 the church people at the annual meeting agreed that "this parish from Exeter 1888 be known as "The Parish of the Trivitt Memorial Church"

The cornerstone was laid by Bishop Baldwin on the 1st of August 1887 according to the service appointed by the Provincial Synod Mr Trivitt read an address to the bishop and handed him an engraved trowel with which his Lordship "well and truly in the name of the Eternal Trinity laid the foundation stone". Those present included Archdeacon Marsh of London, The Reverend Messrs. Craig of Clinton (The Rural Dean), Downie of Lucan, Magahy of Seaforth, Kar of Mitchell, Thomas of Ailsa Craig, Bridgeman of Hensall, Freeman of London (the Curate of the Cathedral). Dr. Rollins who represented the Town Council, and the ministers of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. The choir was accompanied by an orchestra conducted by Mr. Samuel Gidley. In the cornerstone were placed papers, coins, etc. Also enclosed were papers prepared by Trivitt, Elliott, and W. J. Carling. The collection from the "immense crowd", Robinson noted, was $74. To conclude the day the visiting clergy were entertained by the Rector "at his residence".

The plans for the church were drawn up, at a cost of more than $1500, by the firm of Peter Jones and McBride of London and are a replica of a portion of Exeter Cathedral. The contract for the brickwork was awarded to Howard. Dyer, Evans and Heaman Nobbs of London did the cut stone work, and W. H. Reynolds of Hensall was responsible for the woodwork. Painting, slating, and everything else was the work of the London firm.

The building of the church was under the architect's supervision. It is a fine specimen of early Gothic architecture, consisting of a nave, transepts, chancel, and tower — all substantially built of local white brick. Ohio sandstone trimmings are liberally used throughout and every opportunity of creating a massive and solid effect was utilized. The bosses, finials of the towers, and some portions of the belt courses and the five Ionian crosses which finish each gable, are beautifully carved. The northern entrance is by a handsome open porch while the main entrance on the western side of the tower is through a double arch of lofty height and beautifully moulded. Each arch is supported on a pair of New Brunswick granite pillars with carved capitals.

Inside the walls are sand finished and painted. The woodwork is of white pine, stained an oak shade. The interior dimensions are nave, 79 by 38 feet, chancel, 25 feet square, transepts, each 25 by 14 feet. The seating accommodation is 600 and with extra seats, 1000.

The tower is solid and massive, 17 feet square outside, not including the buttresses. It rises to a height of 92 feet. A spiral oak staircase in the turret in the southeast angle leads from the vestibule to the first floor. From here to the top of the tower is reached by a well-built staircase. The belfrey was specialty built to hold a set of chimes.

The chancel rises three steps above the floor of the nave and contains the organ loft on the north side. The ceiling of the chancel was panelled in squares, painted blue with gold stars, and forming a groined arch over the organ loft. The door to the east of the organ loft leads to the crypt or basement where the coal cellars and gas-lighting machines used to be. A temporary Vestry was placed under the organ loft.

Trivitt Memorial Church was opened on the 23rd of December, 1888 one week after the closing services in Christ Church. The bell, "in its new home", rang for the first time that morning at 7.30 to call the people to the first service — Holy Communion at 8.00 o'clock

The largest number of Communicants sixty-one, in the history of the Parish were present During the balance of the day three more services were held At each of them Bishop Baldwin preached to congregations overflowing the seats, 650 at eleven o clock, 850 at a Confirmation service in the afternoon, and 1200 in the evening — a total of 2700 persons The offering, Robinson pointed out was $350

A Vestry meeting was called for February 15, 1889, at which the church furnishings committee reported on their activities and considered with the people "the means to be adopted for raising the funds necessary to discharge the liability incurred for the seating, lighting, 'warming', and otherwise furnishing the church" Application was made to the Synod Office for permission to sell the old church property A committee consisting of Spackman, Archer Mill, E H Fish, and N D Hurdon was to solicit funds with which to meet the indebtedness The stipend was raised to $800 per annum Mr Lambrook the Sexton was to receive $125 a year

On May 10th the debts were Hong $209, Reynolds, $324 Lambrook $20 Byrne $125 Hamlin, $208 (on a note held by him), other notes in the hands of a Mr Bell totalled $1100 and a Mr Whitcock for $1400 With the addition of a bill for $10 for gasoline, and a few other outstanding debts the total owed by the parish was $3782 Against this were promises of $460 which would reduce the indebtedness to $3322 This was not to mention the $100 owed on the matting "for which the 'Busy bees' are working" or the $874 still owing on the organ "which debt is being provided for by the Ladies Guild"

In October 1889 one of the Minutes of the Meeting stated that the members present "heartily sympathize with Mr Trivitt in the trials he is at present enduring for the Church's sake and we trust that he may be spared to surmount them all and complete the work by Divine Providence allotted to him to fulfill" The "trials" were in connection with a lawsuit brought against him by Nobbs, the stone mason No more information is available but it may be that the difficulty concerned the tower which it is thought, was not finished at the same time as the rest of the building

But Trivitt was not yet finished with his generosity to the parish At a special meeting on the 17th of February, 1890 the Rector announced that Mr Trivitt had offered to provide $2000 for a Rectory, $2000 for a school-house (Parish Hall), and a Vestry, $2000 for the purchase and installation of a Peal of Bells, and $6000 which, at his death was to be used as an Endowment Fund In consideration of this the Synod agreed to pay him 6% interest on $4000 of this latter amount during his lifetime Further, the congregation was to apply the proceeds of the sale of the old Rectory and grounds against the cost of the new one, including the furnace It was Trivitt's wish that the new buildings conform as nearly as possible with the architectural style of the church To these things the Vestry Meeting agreed and the Rector, Wardens, and R H Collins presented the proposals to the Executive Committee of the Diocese for their approval

The first child baptized in Trivitt Memorial Church was Frederick John, son of the late Samuel Littlejohn. Mary Anne Clarke and James Flynn were first to be married within its walls. The first funeral service was conducted for Alfred Dew.

The church was consecrated by Bishop Baldwin on the 31st of December, 1889. There was "the usual trouble about seats" (whatever that was!), Robinson reported in his summary of the year's activities. There was, as well, "an unusual one regarding the organist. This last trouble was settled by Mrs. Trivitt with a large personal outlay for the cause of Christian peace — we deem it thus an ungodly and mischief making woman caused the trouble and a pious and peace-loving woman settled it."

Trivitt Memorial Church about 1893

We have no way of knowing whether this difficulty, whatever it was contributed to Mrs. Trivitt's sudden death on December 23, 1889 which, incidentally, occurred exactly a year to the day after the church was opened. Robinson called her "the lady bountiful of Exeter for many years". He continued: "With sad hearts we laid her to rest beneath the chancel on the last day of the year". (The same day as the consecration of the church.) "The stone vault may hold the lady till Jesus comes but the life upon earth by its example is existing still. O the dreary future without her. She gave of her means, she laboured for the church, a noble woman, a faithful wife, while she lived we felt that

> sainthood was a reality." Bishop Baldwin gave the funeral address to a congregation that filled the seats and the aisles.
>
> Anticipating a few years, we find that her husband joined her in 1894. He died on the 18th of July at the age of 82 and was buried beside his wife in a vault under the chancel of the church. This service was conducted by Bishop Baldwin, assisted by Robinson (who had moved in the meantime), Shore of Lucan, and the Rector, E. W. Hunt. Brass plates on the floor now mark their place of burial.

The church has continued to serve the parish. There have been many problems for the parish in maintaining such a large and imposing church but somehow the Anglicans of Exeter have continued to meet the costs of so doing. A comment is perhaps needed to explain the greater detail given about Trivitt as opposed to the other churches. The explanation is simply that the author used the history of the church done by Dr. H. Seegmiller, a former rector. No such detailed history exists for the other churches and the author was unable to meet the deadline for publication and also do the necessary research on the other churches.

The first Presbyterian congregation was organized in Exeter in 1861 by the Rev. John Logie. The nearest Presbyterian church to

The First Presbyterian Church in Exeter. This Church also served as a Roman Catholic Church for a time.

the Exeter area was the Rodgerville congregation and the distance and poor roads dissuaded the Presbyterians from Exeter from attempting the trip very often. The first services were held in Francistown in a store near the corner. Services were held here until 1863 when a church was built on the north side of the river on the west

side of Main Street. The indebtedness incurred by the erection of the church was wiped out by 1867.

The first minister, John Logie, had come to Canada from Scotland and served in a number of localities in Southwestern Ontario. He remained in Exeter until 1875.

In 1876 the present structure was built under the leadership of the Rev. A. Y. Hartley. The church was named Caven Presbyterian Church after the Rev. Dr. William Caven, then Principal of Knox College. By 1883 the church had about 75 members from 35 families.

In 1883 the Rev. W. M. Martin arrived from Norwich. The church was now a separate charge. In 1885 the Manse was built.

In April, 1893 a windstorm blew the roof and tower off the church but the small congregation struggled to rebuild the church in its present form.

The Rev. Martin remained in Exeter for 26 years. His family included his son William Melville Martin who eventually became Premier of Saskatchewan and later Chief Justice of that province. Martin was succeeded by the Rev. S. F. Sharp who died suddenly just before services in April, 1918. Since 1918 nine ministers have served the congregation which has grown to over one hundred families.

The original Presbyterian church was acquired by the Roman Catholic church in May of 1878. The number of Catholic families in the village was small but nevertheless the church was purchased and on Sunday July 21, 1878 "the opening and dedicating services were held". The building was well filled. "A large number were from the parish of Offa, while a considerable sprinkling of the congregation was composed of Protestants of Exeter." The services were conducted by Rev. Father Kilroy from Stratford and Rev. Father Brennan. In his sermon Father Kilroy thanked the "Protestants for their subscriptions toward the church and assured them he would pray that they would be able to see the true religion of Jesus Christ".

The history of the Roman Catholic Church in Exeter is quite vague. The Catholic community in the village was small and the church was probably closed a very few years after its opening. The Roman Catholics of Exeter were members of the parish to the south of the town and have remained so to the present.

"The Grand Salvation Army
will
Open Fire on Exeter
on
Saturday, June 7, 1884
Heavy Firing

will be heard
Blood and Fire Brigade
under orders."

With this advertisement the Salvation Army made its first impact on Exeter. The army contingent came from St. Marys under Captain Barley. The Army was active in Exeter for the next several years. They drew large crowds of "country folk" to their services for a while with their "God glorifying and Devil defeating services" where the rules prohibited chewing tobacco, laughing or talking.

The Army was not popular in Exeter, however. During their parades and services its members were pelted with apples and other items. On one occasion one of the "soldiers" was "hit hard on the head while praying". Boys "kicked up a racket" during services and on October 30, 1884 the soldiers were pelted with snowballs. But as the Times remarked "the valiant warriors loved persecution so the boys were trying to make them bappy".

In October, 1885 one letter to the Times complained as follows:

> "For over a year now the S.A. has had undisputed sway in Exeter. During that time, almost every night has witnessed their parade, with drums beating, flag flaunting and a most discordant sound, which, in their enthusiasm they call singing. Numberless horses have been frightened by that drum and flag, and numerous serious accidents have been narrowly escaped. Some day, when some terrible or fatal accident occurs as a result, the people will wake up to the fact that the methods of worship adopted by the Army are an unmitigated nuisance. During these dark nights when people are driving on the streets, there is a great deal of positive danger. But the army appears to have no respect for anybody's rights or privileges but their own. ..."

The Army stayed on nevertheless staging "grand real fights with the Devil", the Hallelujah Guards singing songs of Victory and generally attacking satan and sin. Their vehemence finally led Council to forbid the Army from beating their drums and singing in the streets. Said the Times "the noise of the Army has been a disgrace to the place ever since they came here". In July, 1886 a fight between one of the soldiers and a young Sanders lad resulted in the soldier being felled by a blow to the temple with a large stone wielded by Sanders. By October, 1888 the Army had 20 adherents in the village. There are few records available but the Army may have owned the building on James Street which had served as the old fire hall and jail. During the 1880's and 1890's they met here or in one of the halls above various stores. The Army disappeared in the village for a number of years after the 1890's but reappeared again briefly in the 1920's.

The only other church that existed in Exeter in the 19th century

seems to have been a small Baptist congregation which was in existence in the 1880's. There are very few references to this group and a Baptist church did not exist in the town until very recent years. The Pentecostal organization appeared in the 1930's when the Pentecostal Mizpah Theatre made periodic appearances in the village. Pentecostal tent meetings with their "Red Hot Evangelism" were held in Exeter during the early 1940's and in 1947 a Pentecostal church was established. The congregation grew to the point where it was able to purchase the old Main Street Methodist Church a few years ago.

With the post-war Dutch migration to the South Huron area churches of Dutch origin were established in the community. Since these are of fairly recent origin no history will be given for these churches or for the small Seventh Day Adventist congregation which has existed for several decades in Exeter.

The central place of the church in the social life of the community continued throughout the nineteenth century and for the first half of the twentieth century. During these decades virtually everyone in the community was closely associated with one of the churches. As we noted in previous chapters social and recreational activities were organized and sponsored by the churches so that people not only worshipped in the churches but also spent a good deal of their free time in church-organized activities. However the churches no longer occupy the primary place in the social and recreational life of the community. Dwindling congregations and changing social patterns have resulted in a diminishing influence on the part of the various churches on the lives of the people not only in Exeter but throughout the country.

chapter 8

Schools

"Far too many youngsters are loafing about this town who should be in school The village is breeding tramps and criminals for every idle boy or girl is a potential scoundrel".
(The Exeter Times)

'The ideal of greatness and magnitude in the history of the world has existed with the people of Exeter in the railroad and in the new school building . . . The school is truly . . . the best schoolhouse in the country"

This item from the Times was referring to the school that was built on Victoria Street west of the present elementary school in 1875 A description of this school written by George Fenwick is given below:

> "Our antipathy was aroused because we were being prepared to resume our studies at school But previous to our actual entrance Billy, Thomas and I had gone on a quiet scouting trip to the brick school house, the purpose of which was to see how the land lay, figuring of course, on the possibility of occasionally sneaking out on truancy expeditions that we might get longer breaths of fresh air for our lungs

> and more freedom for our legs and to get away from the grind of the school room. But after looking over the proposition we came to the conclusion that things did not look very promising. For the school grounds were entirely enclosed with a six or seven foot board fence divided in the centre for the boys and girls play-ground. We also observed that the windows of Mr. Gregory, the headmaster, looked out upon the only entrance to and from the grounds. We concluded that this added a double hazard to the possibility of our making a getaway. Later we learned this to be a fact when we saw with our own eyes the sternness of his features and with what persistency he hung about the entrance to the schoolhouse during the recess period always grasping in his hand a vicious looking strap in which he took a too great delight in wrapping about the shoulders and legs of any pupil guilty of the least infraction of the school rules."

M. M. Rosebrugh was the first principal of this school but he resigned shortly after the school was opened to enter into a partnership with Mr. Vandusen in a drugstore. This school which served Exeter for 75 years was erected to replace the old school house which had been located on an acre of land on the east side of Andrew Street just north of Victoria Street. The old Andrew Street school had three rooms and must have been opened in the late 1850's or the early 1860's. In addition a junior room was held in a house where Miss Elston taught.

The first school in Exeter was S.S. 5 Usborne and was located in Francistown. It had been opened in the late 1830's and was also the first school in Usborne Township. The first teacher in this school was "Thomas Taylor an Englishman whose education and ability left nothing to be desired. He was a man of scholarly appearance, middle-aged and a bachelor . . . Taylor took up his residence in the log school house." Eventually Taylor assumed in addition to his duties as schoolmaster the work of Township Clerk of Usborne. "After some years when Thomas Taylor was considered by many a very efficient fixture in the community, his pupils arrived one morning and found an empty school house. Everything was in perfect order that morning . . . There was no sign of a struggle no sign of foul play, nor had there been anything in Taylor's manner the day before to indicate that anything out of the ordinary was about to happen." And nothing ever was found to indicate what had happened. No one had encountered him on the road. There was no evidence that he had been killed and no indication that he had committed suicide. He simply vanished without a trace.

In any case, these little school houses, S.S. 5 Usborne, Stephen No. 9 and the Andrew Street school house served the educational needs of the village until the new school was opened in 1875. The last principal in the Andrew Street school and the first principal

in the new school was Mr Rosebrugh The trustees of the old school house during its last years were James Pickard, William Sanders, J W Broderick, David Johns, Isaac Whitlock and John McDonnell These men were also the first trustees of the new school

One of the first problems faced by the Board of Trustees in the new school arose when one of the teachers, Miss Logie, caused a considerable furor in the village The Times reported that Miss Logie "instead of using entreaty and persuasion has been using a large stick, in the one end of which was fixed a nail driven through the stick, sharpened at both ends and protruding at either side With this instrument the scholars were punished repeatedly by this innovator of school rule" Miss Logie was reprimanded and allowed to continue her duties on probation but without her instrument of persuasion The Board also faced complaints that it was not keeping the public informed of its action In 1875 the Board spent the "enormous sum of $9000" and "the parties who pay the piper" were expressing in the columns of the Times dissatisfaction with the Board's failure to provide the public with all the financial facts

No secondary level of education was provided in Exeter during these early years Seaforth and Clinton had collegiates and those Exeter scholars who wished to continue their education beyond the entrance year had to attend school in either Seaforth or Clinton By the mid-1880's there was a growing feeling that high school education should be provided in Exeter In 1888 the Times pointed out that Clinton, Seaforth, Goderich, Mitchell and Parkhill had high schools The young people from Exeter who wanted to go to high school went to school in these towns "at great expense, also at risk of injuring their morals" It was not until the late 1890's, however, that any high school education was provided

But the elementary education that was available was good according to the standards of the time By 1878 Thomas Gregory was principal, his salary that year was $625 The staff included Miss J A Spitzer, Miss E Hicks, Miss J Butcher, Miss A Henderson and Miss H Shram

These teachers' salaries ranged from $225 to $275 per year

Gregory remained the principal until 1889 In 1888 he had been highly commended by the Advocate

> "As a result of indefatigable industry and keenness of purpose Mr Thomas Gregory principal of Exeter Public School succeeded in establishing a record which has never been equalled in the annals of a public school teacher by passing fourteen pupils for entrance to high school as a teacher Mr Gregory is amiable and warmhearted and yet firm and resolute "

Despite this performance Mr Gregory was dismissed as prin-

The Exeter Public School built 1875

cipal in 1889. The village was considerably stirred up over Gregory's dismissal and over the appointment of G. H. Tom as principal. There was opposition to Gregory's dismissal and there was great opposition to Tom's appointment. If a new principal was needed the feeling was that George Holman's application should have been accepted. As one ratepayer wrote:

> "Phat is the trustees doin? Bedad, I think theyre makin fools of thim selves. Hirin a boy for $600 when they could git plenty of good min at $500. Sure every spalpeen of a scholar in town knows that their fathers and mothers aint satisfied . . . Ive nothin agin the boy. Hes a dacent boy enough . . . ."

Another letter said:

> "I must protest against the recent action of the trustees in securing the services of Mr. G. Tom as principal of our school. Not that I have the slightest objection to Mr. Tom in his proper place".

Tom did not remain principal for long in Exeter. By the early 1890's T. A. Brown was the principal. Mr. Brown resigned in 1894 and Mr. Lockhart became headmaster. In that year Exeter public school had 405 pupils. In addition to the principal who taught the 38 pupils in the senior fifth class, there were five other teachers.

Miss Gregory had fifty-six pupils in the senior third year, Miss Waldrond had seventy-one pupils in the senior second; Miss Pringle had seventy-one pupils also in a senior second class. Mr. R. Ferguson had seventy-five pupils in his class. Miss Clara Vosper taught the senior fourth which had thirty-seven pupils. Miss Vosper continued to teach in the Exeter Public School until January 23, 1919 when she resigned after thirty-six years in Exeter. Before that she had taught four years in Winchelsea. Miss Vosper died at the

Miss Pringle's Room, Exeter Public School, 1894

Top row: Tom Harris, Annie Jones, Annie McAnsh, Ada Hedden, Jessie Gould, Flossie Preszcator, Myrtle Taylor, Della Treble. 2nd row: Mabel Newton, Myrtle Gould, Ethel Armstrong, Nina Carling, Georgie Hyndman, Vera Snell, Louise Carling, Harold Bissett, Merv Hueston, T Smale, Roy Leathorn. 3rd row: Billy Toll, Garnet Heywood, Grover Bissett, Earl Browning, Wes Snell, Jennie Quance, Lottie Elliott, Melv Southcott. 4th row: Bert Piper, Frank Howard, Shirley Bobier, Art Wood, Bill Bowey, Eldred Elliott, Leslie Preszcator, Ira Taylor, Bertie Merton. 5th row: Edna Dow, Iva Box, Olive Prior, Hazel Dignan, Olive Quance, Ethel Elliott, E Brooks, Winnie Carling, George Armstrong. 6th row: May Snell, Flossie Taylor, Ruby Treble, Ruth Rollins, Mary Persons, Veda Handford, May Wood, B Muir, Joe Vosper. 7th row: Edna Follick, Ethel Cobbledick, Vera Cobbledick, Elsie Sutton, Ethel Piper, M Newton, Jessie Matheson, Bertha Snell, Charlie Dyer. Bottom: Ed Vosper, H Howard, E Smale, J Elliott, Bert Muir, J Howard, Tom Carling, E Horn.

age of ninety-two in January, 1951 A plaque commemorating her service to the Exeter Public School hangs in the present school building

By the turn of the century, S J A Boyd had succeeded Lockhart as principal Also by this time the school had a High School Department At this time pupils were able to do the work of the first three forms of high school in Exeter This enabled them to complete the work necessary for the Junior Matriculation Until about 1910 Ontario had a four-year high school program Forms I and II were called Lower School and Forms III and IV were termed

Upper School. Completion of Form III gave the Junior Matriculation Pupils who wanted Form IV still had to leave Exeter to attend school elsewhere From about the time of World War One to 1921 Ontario had a six-year high school but six years were never offered in Exeter Indeed, there was no Form IV until 1921-22 In 1921 the Ontario High School program was reduced to five years and in 1926-27 Exeter introduced the fifth year

Principal Boyd resigned in December 1901, he left Ontario for Hannah, North Dakota where he took over the local newspaper "The Hannah Moon" Boyd was popular and must have had quite a sense of humour because in September 1901 he placed an advertisement in the Times which read

> "The young man who lost his handkerchief while stealing plums from Principal Boyd's orchard can have same by calling at Mr Boyd's residence '

The teachers on Boyd's staff at the turn of the century included Misses Vosper, Gill, Pringle, Waldrond, Robertson and Ball The enrollment in 1901 was 363 Boyd was succeeded by Mr Anderson who remained for one year only leaving in June 1903, for a "more lucrative position in business" The Times commented that "it is to be regretted that there are not better inducements in the profession to retain the ablest teachers"

In 1904 commercial education was added to the High School Department, when Mr W T O'Brien was secured as Commercial Master to teach shorthand, typing, bookkeeping, law, banking and penmanship O'Brien left Exeter shortly thereafter to open the O'Brien Business College in London A Mr W J O'Brien operated the Exeter Commercial Night School during the early years of the century

It was the practice of the Board to advertise for students The advertisement shown below is from 1903

> "The Exeter Public School Board beg to announce that a limited number of seats in the High School Department are now available for the fall term application for which may be made to the secretary Mr Grigg No mistake will be made by parents in committing their children to the care of the staff The object of the Board is to have our town never less than foremost as the center of educational work "

During the period 1910-20 the Exeter High School Department had several principals including W B Weidenhammer, George Sparks, and W Eadie Some of the teachers during this period included Misses Lulu Edmonds, Estelle Craig, Campbell, Viola Dobson, and Quinn The Chairman of the Board at this time was S Martin The Secretary-Treasurer was Miss Kate MacFaul

Space does not permit an exhaustive treatment of the history of

school activities over the years. There were many activities for example the High School Literary Society provided the community with a variety of entertainment. In 1910 the Society staged its programs in the Opera House with debates, choirs, music and drama. The Executive that year included W. Millyard, Lillie Robinson, Evelyn Gill, Herbert Gregory, Millie Martin, and Percy Hardy.

Then, as now, everyone was concerned with what should be taught in the High School. Teachers' Institutes debated such topics as "how to develop a taste for the beautiful? Or "how can we secure independent work among our pupils?" A letter to the Advocate suggested that the school's job was to teach students to be clean, polite, respectful, obedient, truthful, diligent, honest, pure, moral, and manly. Teachers' salaries were constantly under consideration. In the early years of the century, for example, the following comment appeared:

> "Teachers' salaries were taken up by Miss Jean Murray of Exeter and Mr. Norman Geddes of Belgrave. They showed conclusively that teachers are inadequately paid, their work is the noblest, they are training young minds for eternity and yet they aren't paid as well as many uneducated persons who are in other walks of life. The teachers felt that the psychological moment had arrived to do something and those present decided that a minimum salary of $700 should be received by beginners. This should be increased by $50 a year until $900 is reached for the fifth year's salary."

The salary suggested does not seem excessive when the teacher was responsible for classes as large as seventy-five. Supervising the work of the pupils, preparing their slates and exercise books and taking care of all of the other scholastic matters required considerable diligence. In addition, the lighting, heating and ventilation were the responsibility of the teacher as well as the care and maintenance of the outhouse. It was also recommended that the teacher examine the fingernails and teeth of her pupils each morning. If neglect was found, marks were to be deducted.

One of the institutions associated with Exeter's schools for many years was the Grigg store. J. M. Southcott described the store as follows:

> 'The Grigg store was principally a book and stationery store and catered to the schools and pupils of the district.
>
> In those days each pupil was responsible for the purchase of all his school supplies. At the beginning of a new term the scholars would be presented with a list of the books and supplies that would be required.
>
> … There was always a stampede to the Grigg store where the demands had been anticipated and they were ready to meet it. … We would hazard a guess that with human nature what it is, and with Miss MacFaul's unalterable opinion that there were no bad children,

that everything that left the store was not paid for Every child to Miss MacFaul was a dear or a darling

If a family was in straightened circumstances Miss MacFaul never refused them credit However, what the public did not know was that Miss MacFaul had the backing of the Board and where an account could not be collected the School Trustees paid it "

E J Wethey
Principal
Exeter High School
1920-1942

E J Wethey came to the High School Department as principal immediately after the First World War He had served in the army as a sergeant-major Wethey's early education was obtained in Cobourg He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Trinity in 1898 and a Masters Degree from the University of Toronto in 1910 He taught in various schools throughout Ontario including the Carleton Place High School where one of his pupils was Captain Roy Brown of the Royal Flying Corps Brown was the World War One ace who shot down Baron Richtofven Wethey served as principal in Carleton Place from 1911 to 1920 except for the war years Wethey was a mathematics scholar of note at the University having won a Prince of Wales prize and a Wellington Scholarship

Mr Wethey came to Exeter then, in 1920 at a salary of $2200 The High School Department had 116 pupils and 3 teachers, H M Millar, Margaret Ross and Annie Dorrance Wethey established a reputation as an excellent mathematics teacher Over the years he also acquired the reputation of being a bit of a character He served the school and the community well retiring as principal in 1942 being succeeded by

H. L. Sturgis. Wethey remained on staff as a mathematics teacher until 1944 when he retired after a total of 45 years in the teaching profession. He died in 1951 at the age of 74.

During his principalship Wethey initiated the Commencement Exercises. The first Commencement at the High School was held in January, 1922. A description of this Commencement is found below.

> "The first Commencement of the Exeter High School was held in the Opera House on Friday, January 13 with Mr. F. W. Gladman as chairman. The chief speaker of the evening was Col. Walter J. Brown of Western University and his address on 'Education For Citizenship' was interesting and instructive. The musical and literary numbers for the program were given by pupils as follows: piano duet Mabel Johns and Helen Dignan, recitation Verna Walker, violin solo Kenneth Stanbury, piano solo, Margaret Gladman.
>
> The presentation of certificates and diplomas were made by Mr. E. J. Wethey. Mr. W. G. Medd presented the following with scholarships, May Abbott, Marion Woods, Kenneth Stanbury, Margaret Wethey, Harry Greb, Emalie Hogarth and J. Edgar Thompson.
>
> A gold medal was presented to Emalie Hogarth the valedictory was given by Emalie Hogarth."

At the time Wethey was appointed as principal of the High School Department the public school principal was G. S. Howard. Howard's staff included Misses Murray, Kinsman, Taylor and Medd.

The early 1920's saw a reorganization of the Board. The Public School Board was replaced by the Exeter Board of Education in 1921. The members of the first Board were F. W. Gladman, chairman, Canon A. A. Trumper, R. N. Creech, E. M. Dignan, J. G. Stanbury, J. S. Harvey and James Grieve. Miss MacFaul was Secretary. The Board began seriously considering improvements to the school in 1923. The public school had five rooms and a sixth room was urgently needed. An assembly hall was needed and above all it was felt that the time had come for "the abolition of that moral and physical abomination - the outdoor toilet. Our school needs the sanitary lavatory". In 1923 the High School had six rooms and in addition a science laboratory. Major improvements such as a gymnasium were considered to be necessary. The villagers however were not amenable to any large expenditures on the school. Throughout the 1920's various proposals for improving the school were considered and abandoned because of a lack of support. The basement of the library was used as a primary room because of the crowded conditions at the school but no additions were constructed and the school remained overcrowded.

It was not until 1939 that a new building was erected. In that year

Exeter High School Teachers, 1925
Miss Bain Miss McKenzie Miss Hale Miss Ross

the central part of what is now the public school was built as an additional High School facility. The High School continued to use space in the old building as well as the new school.

The next major change in Exeter's educational system came in 1946 when the Exeter High School Area was formed. The new Board met in 1947 and consisted of Dr. H. H. Cowen, Chairman, J. H. Jones, E. L. Mickle, James McAllister, George Hess, A. W. Morgan, Edward Chambers and E. R. Hopper. R. N. Creech was Acting Secretary. The former Exeter Board had purchased in 1946 an old R.C.A.F. building. This building measured 24 feet by 35 feet and provided another classroom, this building came to be called the 'chicken coop!' So the new Board inherited a High School consisting of four buildings viz., the old school erected in 1875, the building erected in 1939, the arena gymnasium and the 'chicken coop'. Public School children used the old 1875 school with the primary room being held in the basement of the library. Not only

were new elementary school facilities needed but a new area High School was obviously required but caution was the rule as the Times suggested:

> "No one need be either unduly alarmed or unduly elated as the county fathers have a way of proceeding cautiously for they are well aware that change is not necessarily progress. Let it never be forgotten that the little red school house has been for many a long day the nursing mother of the men who have made Canada great."

After several years of operating the Exeter school as described above the area high school board opened a new school in 1950. The cornerstone laying had taken place on June 8, 1949. Since then three additions have greatly enlarged the High School so that it can now accommodate comfortably about eleven hundred pupils. The Public School has also been enlarged several times with additions being made to the 1939 structure. In the 1960's a Separate School was built so that Exeter is now served by a modern Secondary school and two Elementary Schools.

The old school was demolished in 1950. As Tom Collingwood remarked "She was a hard old school to work with".

chapter 9

The Municipality and the Town Leaders

'Gentlemen, I congratulate you on your election to the honourable position of the governing body of the Village of Exeter and may our labours be crowned with harmony and good will.'

(W. D. Sanders, Reeve, January 1937)

There have always been people in Exeter, as in every other municipality, who are willing to devote time and energy to provide the leadership for the municipality. Council, Cemetery Board, Public Utilities Commission, Board of Education, Board of Health, Library Board, Recreation Committee, Planning Board, and various other agencies require people to serve and fortunately there are always some people available to perform what B. W. Tuckey described as "thankless jobs". Twenty-five men have served as head of the municipality, twenty as Reeve of the Village, and five as Mayor of the Town of Exeter. Many, many others have served on the Council and on other boards.

In 1873, men like James Pickard, Isaac Carling, and William

Verity assumed the leadership roles. On January 28, 1873, a formal petition from these men and others was presented to the Province of Ontario. This petition asked that the unincorporated villages of Exeter and Francistown be incorporated as a separate Municipality. On March 19, 1873 the Legislature passed, for the third time, Bill Number 148 and on March 29, 1873 this Act was given royal assent and the Village of Exeter was incorporated. The basic reasons for the wish of many inhabitants of the two villages of Exeter and Francistown to incorporate were firstly, the combined populations of the two villages was about one thousand; secondly, the railway was coming and the people of the two villages had met in a public meeting and had directed that a bonus be granted to the railway by the village of Exeter if it was incorporated. It is quite probable that an incorporated municipality would have been formed if the railway had not been built but incorporation would probably have been delayed. The construction of the London, Huron and Bruce Railway was the immediate and direct cause of the incorporation of the Village of Exeter.

The Village was formed by taking the south half of Lot one, Concession One, Hay Township, the north half of Lot 20, Lots 21 to 25 inclusive in Concession One of Stephen Township, and the north half of Lot 15, Lots 16 to 20 inclusive and the south half of Lot 21 in the First Concession of Usborne Township. The census of 1871 showed that the Usborne part contained 277 people, the Stephen section 532 people and the Hay section 35 people. In April, 1874 the Village and the three townships agreed on these figures: Hay 35, Usborne 280 and Stephen 600. The new village assumed one-twenty-fifth of Stephen's debt and one-twenty-seventh of Usborne's debt.

The new village under Returning Officer William Bayley acclaimed Isaac Carling as Reeve, and the following men as Councillors: James Pickard, William H. Verity, John Trick, Edward Drew. The new council met on April 15 in the Orange Hall. The oath of office was administered to the new council by Justice of the Peace Joseph Atkinson. Joseph Acheson and George Kilpatrick were named assessors. The first Treasurer appointed was Robert Sanders, C. Senior was named Tax Collec-

Michael Eacrett

tor and Michael Eacrett was the Clerk. Eacrett remained Clerk until August, 1898. Eacrett was born in Ballybritis, Ireland on August 12, 1837 and migrated with his parents to Hay Township. Eacrett travelled around the United States and then returned to Exeter in the period after the Civil War. He eventually became foreman of the paint department at the Verity works. When Verity moved to Brantford, Eacrett also moved. He worked until 1914 when he was forced to retire because of impaired sight. He returned to Exeter where he died in February, 1926.

The first By-law passed by the new council of the new village was enacted on April 28, 1873 and was a By-law to restrain "horses, sheep and other animals from running at large". The By-law prohibited horses, bulls, oxen, sheep, goats, pigs and geese from running at large. Cows were not prohibited and for decades cows at large remained a problem in the village. The fines provided in the By-law called for 25¢ per horse, bull, ox or pig, 12 and one-half cents per goat or sheep and 5¢ per goose.

In 1873 the auditors, John Ranton and John McDonnell reported the following:

Receipts	Licenses	$ 193.00
	Borrowing	500.00
	Fines	6.00
	Gov't School Grant	140.00
	Statute Labour	82.00
	Taxes	2942.53
Expenses	Local Purposes	$2007.48
	School Grant	961.10
	County	221.31
	Balance	$ 673.64

The tax rate for that first year of incorporation was 8 mills. The license income in 1873 came from tavern licenses, shop licenses, livery stable licenses and from one visiting side show. Among other items of business completed by that first council were appointments of various municipal officials. John Southcott was appointed poundkeeper, the pound charges per day in 1873 were for horses 75¢, for bulls, oxen, cows, heifers, steers 50¢, for pigs 50¢, sheep 25¢, geese 5¢. The fence viewers were George Muttart, Richard Gidley and Isaac Whitlock. William Sanders and John Gill were collectors of statute labour commutation. The Road Commissioner was George Hodgins. William Sanders was the issuer of licenses.

During the next two or three years the Councils appointed

various other important officials, such as, bell ringer R. Walsh at $30.00 per annum, north end pound keeper R. Thomson, assessor Sam Handford $30.00 per annum. In these early years Charles Senior received $30.00 as collector of taxes and M. Eacrett received $75.00 as clerk treasurer.

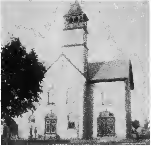
In 1888 the salaries paid to various municipal officials were clerk $120.00, treasurer $30.00, assessor $50.00, constable $325.00. Said the Times proudly, "This municipality will compare favourably with any with regard to low salaries". In 1887 the village's total expenditures were $6905.41 of which education used $2463 or about 40%.

The early councils met in various locations including the Orange Hall, the School House, and the Market House. Council did not have a permanent home until 1887 when the Town Hall was built. In 1886 the people had voted with a majority of 91 in the affirmative to have Council proceed with the erection of a town hall. It was constructed by Ross and Taylor for $3895. The interior was finished and the furnishings provided by S. Gidley. The total cost eventually reached $8000, including the cost of the land. The property was purchased from J. N. Howard after council had considered the corner where the library was built and the south-west corner of Main and Victoria Streets. The situation which finally brought about the erection of the town hall was the need for better court facilities. Ironically the court in recent years moved from the town hall because it was considered inadequate.

Construction of the town hall gave another boost to the village and prompted the Times to say "we want another railway, a high school, more manufacturing". The Times went on to say that "Exeter is known throughout the world, and we think the Times is responsible". The talk of a railway was prompted by the possibility of a CPR line from St. Marys.

People were proud of the new town hall. It signified Exeter's growth and progress. The new town hall had a clock with wooden works, built by George Hess of Zurich in 1887. The clock was kept in running order by Thomas Fitton in the early years and continued to keep Exeter's citizens informed of the time until recent years. It is now in disrepair. In addition to the clock on the town hall there was a bell. The bell-ringing job eventually became associated with the administration of the town weigh scales and cattle yards located behind the hall. In 1901, for example, George Kemp first, and then James Dennis took the job for $40 per year. The bell was rung at 7 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m., 6 p.m. and for curfew if required. A curfew called for children fourteen and under to be off the streets by 9.30 p.m. In 1902 council rescinded the By-law because it was too difficult to enforce.

Nomination meetings took place in various places until the Town Hall was built. For example in 1878 at a nomination meeting held in the Market House nine men were nominated for council. This meeting produced various comments about Exeter emerging as a "very smart village" in five years. One unfortunate note was mentioned by Eldred Drew. He "deprecated the sectional feeling which seemed to pervade the two ends of the village. If such an unfortunate condition of affairs were allowed to continue we should soon find the village the loser. The only way to secure the lasting prospects of the village was by all working harmoniously together". This sectional feeling continued to exist between Exeter South and the North end for decades. Indeed, the feeling has not yet totally disappeared. The North end, or Francistown, seemed to be regarded as the less desirable area although it is difficult to be sure of the reasons for this.



Town Hall about 1890

Apparently there was something wrong with the 1878 election and a second nomination was held on Feb. 1, before the village had a government. Second nominations occurred several times but there was always a willing group to serve as a council. After the election in these early years, the clerk would publicly announce the elected in the street.

The clerks of the municipality provided continuity for the councils and over the years only six clerks have served the village and town. Michael Eacrett was mentioned. In August of 1898, George H. Bissett assumed the duties of clerk; he resigned in April 1905 and was succeeded by Joseph Senior who held the office until January 20, 1911 when he was succeeded by T. B. Carling. In May, 1915 Senior resumed the duties of clerk and remained in office until August 14, 1941 when he resigned after a total of thirty-two years as clerk. He had taken a leave of absence in 1936 for four months during which time Amelia Acheson acted as clerk. Senior had worked for thirteen Reeves and was honoured at a banquet in October, 1941. C. V. Pickard was chosen as clerk to succeed Senior. Mr. Pickard served for about 25 years and was succeeded by Eric Carscadden.

The various other municipal offices such as assessor, collector, and so on were held by many people over the years and no attempt will be made to record these office holders. The heads of the councils are shown below and the councils for each year are also shown below.

HEADS OF COUNCIL

Isaac Carling	1 year	1873
George Willis	2 years	1874-75
Wharton Hodgson	1 year	1876
Lancelot Hardy	9 years	1877-1885
J A. Rollins	7 years	1886-1891, 1893
W. Bawden	3 years	1894, 1896, 1910
T H McCallum	2 years	1895, 1909
A Q. Bobier	4 years	1897, 1906, 1908
T B Carling	2 years	1898, 1903
H. Spackman	1 year	1899
W G. Bissett	4 years	1900, 1901, 1904, 1905
W H. Levitt	1 year	1902
John W. Taylor	4 years	1911, 1914, 1915, 1916
W J. Heaman	2 years	1912, 1913
B W F. Beavers	7 years	1917-1923
W. D. Sanders	8 years	1924-1927, 1934, 1937 -1939
Chas. B. Snell	2 years	1928-1929
B M. Francis	4 years	1930-1933
T. Pryde	2 years	1935-1936

B W Tuckey	10 years	1940-1948, 1951 (mayor)
A.J Sweitzer	2 years	1949-1950
W G Cochrane	3 years	1952-1954
R E Pooley	7 years	1955-1961
E Simmons	3 years	1962-1964
J H W Delbridge	10 years	1965-1974

COUNCILS OF EXETER 1873 - 1972

1873
Reeve —Isaac Carling
James Pickard
William H Verity
John Trick
Edward Drew

1874
Reeve —George Willis
W H Verity
J Trick
J Pickard
E Drew

1875
Reeve —George Willis
W H Verity
E. Drew
L. Hardy
J Pickard

1876
Reeve —Wharton Hodgson
W H Verity
L Hardy
E Drew
J Pickard

1877
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W H Verity
John Sanders
R Bissett

1878
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
W H Verity
G Samwell
J N Howard
R Bissett

(Council resigned in January; second vote in February)

1879
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
J Sanders
R Bissett
E Drew

1880
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
J Ranton
E Drew

(The St Marys Journal referred to one of these men as a walking whiskey barrel)

1881
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
W Bissett
E. Drew
J Pickard
W H Verity

1882
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
E. Drew
W Fenwick

1883
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
W Fenwick
A. G Dyer

1884
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
A G Dyer
D Johns

1885
Reeve —Lancelot Hardy
J Pickard
W Bissett
A G Dyer
D Johns

1886
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
D Johns
J Pickard
W Hoskin

1887
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
D Johns
J Pickard
T B Carling

1888
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
T B Carling
J Pickard
T H MacCallum

1889
Reeve —J A Rollins
J Pickard
W Bissett
T B Carling
T H MacCallum

1890
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
D A Ross
H Spackman
J Oke

1861
Reeve —J A Rollins
W G Bissett
E Christie
T B Carling
D A Ross

1892
Reeve —W Bawden
E Christie
H Spackman
D Ross
T B Carling

1893
Reeve —J A Rollins
H Spackman
T B Carling
E Christie
T B MacCallum

1894
Reeve —W Bawden
W G Bissett
T B Carling
A Q Bobier
J W Taylor

1895
Reeve —T H MacCallum
T B Carling
J W Taylor
W Treble
W Harding

(MacCallum tied with Bawden. The Returning Officer voted for MacCallum)

1896
Reeve —W Bawden
C Snell
W Treble
T B Carling
J Taylor

1897
Reeve —A Q Bobier
J W Taylor
C B Snell
J A Rollins
J Dauncey

1898
Reeve —T B Carling
W G Bissett
E Christie
W Harding
J Evans

1699
Reeve —H Spackman
J Evans
J Taylor
J Armstrong
J Muir

1900
Reeve —W G Bissett
W H Levitt
I Armstrong

J Muir
J Evans

1901
Reeve —W G Bissett
W H Levitt
J Muir
J Evans
I Armstrong

1902
Reeve —W H Levitt
W Harding
J Muir
J Wood
J Davis

1903
Reeve —T B Carling
J Cobbledick
J A Gillespie
T Hawkins
J T Manning

(Manning was absent for three months and then replaced by J Creech)

1904
Reeve —W G Bissett
J W Taylor
J Muir
I Armstrong
J Wood

1905
Reeve —W G Bissett
I Armstrong
W H Levitt
J Muir
J Wood

1906
Reeve —A Q Bobier
A E Fuke
W J Heaman
E. Treble
J Creech

1907
Reeve —A Q Bobier
A E Fuke
W J Heaman
J J Knight
W Johns

1908
Reeve —A Q Bobier
J J Knight
W Johns
W J Heaman
A E Fuke

(Bobier defeated Bawden by 44 votes)

1909
Reeve —T H MacCallum
W Johns
W J Heaman
C Luker
W J Carling

1910
Reeve —W Bawden
W J Heaman
C Luker
W H Levitt
W A Balkwill

(Bawden died in October and was replaced by J Taylor Luker moved from Exeter and was replaced by W W Walper)

1911
Reeve —J W Taylor
W H Levitt
W C. Rivers
L Day
W W Walper

1912
Reeve —W J Heaman
W H Levitt
W Rivers
J H Scott
A Ford

1913
Reeve —W J Heaman
J H Scott
J Hind
J Doyle
T Harton

1914
Reeve —J W Taylor
J R Hind
T Harton
J Doyle
B W F Beavers

1915
Reeve —J W Taylor

G Roulston
B W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton

1916
Reeve —J W Taylor
B W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton
G Roulston
(Beavers was Warden in 1916)

1917
Reeve —B W F Beavers
J R Hind
T Harton
L Day
C B Snell

1918
Reeve —B W F Beavers
L Day
J Elston
C B Snell
W H Penhale

1919
Reeve —B W F Beavers
L Day
J Elston
C B Snell
W H Penhale

1920
Reeve —B W F Beavers
W Ward
J Elston
J Davis
W H Penhale

1921
Reeve —B W F Beavers
J Davis
J Elston
W H Penhale
C B Snell

1922
Reeve —B W F Beavers
J Davis
F A Ellerington
C F Hooper
B M Francis

1923
Same as above (B W F Beavers was Warden)

1924
Reeve —W D Sanders
J Davis
J M Southcott
C F Hooper
E Coultis

1925
Reeve —W D Sanders
E Coultis
J Davis
C F Hooper
J Hawkins
(Sanders defeated C B Snell by 15 votes)

1926
Reeve —W D Sanders
E Coultis
J Davis
W Gillespie
J Hawkins

1927
Reeve —W D Sanders
E Coultis
E Davis
W Gillespie
J Hawkins

1928
Reeve —C B Snell
H Bierling
B M Francis
E J Christie
H C Rivers
(Snell finally defeated W D Sanders after his fifth try)

1929
Reeve —C B Snell
H Bierling
E J Christie
B M Francis
H C Rivers
(Snell died in November and Francis was Acting Reeve. E J Christie also died)

1930

Reeve —B M Francis
H Bierling
J Grieve
H Rivers
D Rowcliffe

1931

Reeve —B M Francis
Others same as 1930

1932

Reeve —B M Francis
J H Grieve
D Rowcliffe
S Ross
G Williams

(Francis defeated W D Sanders by 16 votes Williams died in September and was replaced by H Bierling)

1933

Reeve —B.M Francis
H Bierling
J H Grieve
S Ross
D Rowcliffe

(Francis defeated W D Sanders by 15 votes)

1934

Reeve —W D Sanders
H Bierling
J H Grieve
D Rowcliffe
S Ross

(Sanders defeated Francis by 26 votes)

1935

Reeve —T Pryde
J W Hern
J W Morley
G F Roulston
H C Rivers

1936

Reeve —T Pryde
H T Rowe
J W Hern
E M Dignan
J W Morley

(Rowe resigned and was replaced by W E Middleton)

1937

Reeve —W D Sanders
E.M Dignan
J Wellington Hern
F A May
H O Southcott

(Dignan and Hern were the only two nominated for council at the first nomination meeting, so they were acclaimed to council At a second nomination meeting on January 18, 4 were nominated with May and Southcott being elected)

1938

Reeve —W D Sanders
E M Dignan
F A May
H O Southcott
B W Tuckey

1939

Reeve —W D Sanders
J W Hern
E M Dignan
B W Tuckey
H O Southcott

1940

Reeve —B W Tuckey
E.M Dignan
H O Southcott
J W Hern
S B Taylor

(Tuckey defeated W D Sanders who wanted to be Warden)

1941

Reeve —B W Tuckey
E M Dignan
J W Hern
H O Southcott
S B Taylor

(All of the above were acclaimed)

1942

Reeve —B W Tuckey
E M Dignan
J W Hern
H O Southcott
S B Taylor

(The 1941 Council was returned to office under the Wartime Provincial Extension Act)

1943

Reeve —B W Tuckey
A J Sweitzer
H Bierling
E M Dignan
J W Hern

(Tuckey defeated W D Sanders and was appointed Warden of the County)

1944

Reeve —B W Tuckey
H Bierling
E.M Dignan
J W Hern
A J Sweitzer

1945

Same as 1944

1946

Reeve —B W Tuckey
E M Dignan
J W Hern
W C Allison
J Caldwell

1947

Reeve —B W Tuckey
W J Allison
W G Cochrane
A J Sweitzer
J Caldwell

(Caldwell had tied with R C Dinney This forced Clerk Pickard to cast the deciding vote Dinney indicated he wished the clerk to vote for Caldwell)

1948

Same as 1947

1949

Reeve —A J Sweitzer
E Lindenfield
W Hern
D O Hughes
L Snider

(Qualification was completed with one minute to spare)

1950

Reeve —A J Sweitzer
H L Snider
E Lindenfield
V Heywood
W Webster

THE FIRST TOWN COUNCIL

1951

Mayor —B Tuckey
Reeve —L. Snider
Deputy-Reeve—W G Cochrane
E. Beaver
R C Dinney
W Mackenzie
W Webster
A Snelgrove
R Campbell

(61% of the voters turned out at the polls Snider defeated Bierling by 52 votes Tuckey defeated Sweitzer by 205 votes Cochrane defeated V Heywood by 171 votes)

1952

Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R E Pooley
Deputy-Reeve—W Mackenzie
E Beaver
A Snelgrove
R Dinney
R Bailey
E Brady
E Witmer

(At this time former Mayor Tuckey said it was a Good time to quit" it was a thankless job)

1953

Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R E. Pooley
Deputy-Reeve—W Mackenzie
R Bailey
E. Brady
R Dinney
R D Jermyn
A Snelgrove
E Witmer

1954

Mayor —W G Cochrane
Reeve —R E Pooley
Deputy-Reeve—W Mackenzie
E Brady
R Jermyn
A Snelgrove
R Bailey
R Dinney
E Witmer

1955

Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C Mawhinney
R D Jermyn
E W Brady
R Taylor
R Dinney
A Snelgrove
R Bailey

(2 nomination meetings were needed to fill council and there was a threat of a third)

1956

Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C Mawhinney
W Musser
G Fisher
R Taylor
R Bailey
A Pym
R Dinney

1957

Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C Mawhinney
W Musser
G Fisher
R Bailey
R Taylor
A Pym
M Greene

1958

Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C Mawhinney
C M Farrow
G Fisher
M Greene
R Taylor
R Bailey
W Musser

1959

Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—C Mawhinney
E Simmons
M Greene
G Fisher
R Taylor
W Musser
G Rether

(Rether tied with Farrow but Rether won on the recount)

1960

Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —C Mawhinney
Deputy-Reeve—G Fisher
J Weber
G Rether
R Taylor
C Farrow
M Greene
W Musser

(Only 23% of the voters turned out at the polls)

1961

Mayor —R E Pooley
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—G Fisher
J Delbridge
R Taylor
R Bailey
C Farrow
W Musser
E Simmons

1962

Mayor —E Simmons
Reeve —W Mackenzie
Deputy-Reeve—G Fisher
J Delbridge
J L Wooden
F Wright
C Farrow
R Taylor
R Bailey

(Mackenzie had failed in his bid for Wardenship in 1958 by losing to Morrissey on the 4th ballot. Mackenzie died in January 1962 and Fisher resigned as Deputy-Reeve and was appointed Reeve. Farrow and Bailey both resigned as Councillors and allowed their names to stand for Deputy-Reeve. Farrow was elected as Deputy-Reeve and Bailey was elected as Councillor again. W Musser was elected to fill Farrow's post as Councillor)

1963 - 1964

Mayor —E Simmons
Reeve —G Fisher
Deputy-Reeve—W Musser
J Delbridge
J.L. Wooden
F Wright
R Taylor
N Ferguson
R Bailey

(This was the beginning of the two year terms. In June Musser resigned and Bailey was elected Deputy-Reeve. C E Boyle filled the vacant Council seat)

1965 - 1966

Mayor —J Delbridge
Reeve —C E Boyle
Deputy-Reeve—R Bailey
C V Barrett
M Cudmore
R. Taylor
J.L. Wooden
F Wright
P Gandon

(Gandon replaced R Bailey upon Bailey's death and D MacGregor took Gandon's place)

1967 - 1968

Mayor —J Delbridge
Reeve —C E Boyle
Deputy-Reeve—M Cudmore
D MacGregor
J Newby
R Taylor
G Vriese
J.L. Wooden
F Wright

1969 - 1970

Mayor —J Delbridge
Reeve —C E Boyle
Deputy-Reeve—M Cudmore
R Dobson
(Mrs.) H Jermyn
D MacGregor
T MacMillan
R Taylor
G Vriese

(G Vriese died in office. Mrs Jermyn was the first and only woman ever to sit on Council)

1971 - 1972

Mayor —J Delbridge
Reeve —C.E Boyle
Deputy-Reeve—D MacGregor
M Cudmore
Mrs. H Jermyn
T MacMillan
K Ottewell
B Shaw
R Taylor

1973 - 1974

Mayor —J H W Delbridge
Reeve —C E Boyle
Deputy Reeve—Mrs H Jermyn
B Shaw
F Wright
B Hoogenboom
T. MacMillan
R Simpson
H Patterson

It is not possible to comment on all of the men who served. Indeed, it is doubtful if comments should be made at all, but perhaps a few words may be said about some of the men. The first

Reeve, Isaac Carling, has been mentioned previously. Lancelot Hardy served as Reeve for nine years. He was born in Ireland in 1835 and came with his parents to London in 1842. He was a bridge builder by trade and in profession an Anglican and Conservative. Hardy died in 1922 at the age of 87. In 1923, Mrs. Hardy presented a large framed photograph of Hardy to Council. This photograph still hangs in the Council chambers. J. A. Rollins was Reeve for 7 years and mention was made of Rollins in a previous chapter. One amusing incident concerning Rollins involved his giving of gifts at Christmas one year he was seeking election. Someone changed the name on the tags to his opponent. Alexander Quinn Bobier made a number of innovations. He set up the first Committees of Council, one responsible for fire, water and light, one for roads and bridges, and a cemetery committee. Bobier also established regular meeting nights, the second and fourth Mondays of the month. He was the first to invite a clergyman to open the first meeting of the year.

B. W. F. Beavers is remembered as one of the most able Reeves. He had been a teacher but entered the business field operating a number of stores in Exeter. The Times described him in 1919 as a "young, energetic, capable leader". He served as Warden of the county in 1916.

Only two heads of Council advanced politically to the Provincial Legislature. One was, of course, Carling and the other was Thomas Pryde. Others such as Tuckey and Cochrane sought higher office unsuccessfully.

W. D. Sanders served 8 years as Reeve but he contested virtually every election in the 1920's and 1930's. He became an ever present figure at nomination meetings. Sanders served as a Justice of the Peace from 1907 to 1952. He died in 1952 at the age of 89.

A. J. Sweitzer "must be recognized as one of the hardest working Reeves the village ever had. His energy and resourcefulness will not soon be forgotten", said the Times. Sweitzer was the last Reeve to head the Council.

Benson W. Tuckey, the first Mayor, holds the record as the longest serving Head. He was Reeve for 9 years from 1940 to 1948 and Mayor in 1951. Tuckey, of course, is well known for his business enterprise and political activities as liberal candidate in two elections. Tuckey was born in Hyde Park and moved to the family farm north of Exeter. In 1929 he started the Tuckey Transport Company at the age of 22 with one truck. He expanded the business over the years and in 1971 he sold what can only be described as a million dollar business. Tuckey served as Warden of the county in 1943. He has served on various boards over the years and must be recognized as one of Exeter's leading citizens.

W. G. Cochrane served as Exeter's second mayor. A lawyer, who is now County Crown Attorney, Cochrane in 1953 presented the city of Exeter, England with a silver cigar box and in return he received a BBC recording of the presentation of a gavel to the town of Exeter in December, 1951. This gavel, made from black oak from an old bridge in Exeter, England was presented to a representative of Ontario at Ontario House in 1951. This presentation was made by Exeter, England to Exeter, Ontario to recognize the latter's becoming a town. Tom Pryde later in the month presented the gavel to Mayor Tuckey.

R. E. Pooley was mayor for 7 years and proved to be an able but controversial mayor. Mayor Pooley provided vigorous leadership and did not hesitate to criticize the people of Exeter for apathy and lack of interest in municipal affairs. Mayor Pooley was involved with controversies over the hospital, schools, the dump, and the canning factory.

Eldred Simmons served as Exeter's youngest head of Council, becoming Mayor at the age of 40. He was succeeded by the present Mayor J. H. Delbridge, who in many ways typifies South Huron. Descended from Devon stock, (we mentioned the first Delbridge settler in chapter one) and an Usborne farmer, Mayor Delbridge has served the community well.

The longest terms on Council have been served by James Pickard — 16 years, W. G. Bissett — 18 years, and Ross Taylor — 18 years. Taylor's 18 years were continuous whereas Bissett's were not.

Over the years, people have tended to remember amusing incidents or unflattering performances by Council. For example, in 1954 one councillor had been napping but suddenly came to life when a discussion on increasing councillors' salaries occurred. On the other hand, the 1930 council gave their salary to hold a children's Christmas party and in the early 1960's Mayor Simmons turned his salary back to the town and urged councillors to do the same. Traditionally the reeve entertained council from time to time, for example in 1919 the reeve entertained council at an "oyster feed" in A. W. Statham's restaurant. One retiring councillor entertained the other members of council, the clerk and assessor in a room recently added to his home. The next day this councillor received a new assessment notice!

In 1934 a stormy session of council concerning relief saw the reeve call in the constable to eject a member of council from chambers. The reeve relented, however, and permitted the member to stay. This is the only time things got that violent, although Reeve C. E. Boyle once baited a fellow member of council to the point where that councillor hurled, with deadly accuracy, a heavy book at the Reeve. In September, 1960 there was an argumentative meeting over which Mayor Pooley was very disturbed. But this has gone on for years. In 1888 councillors got under each others' skin as they did in 1968 and will in 1978. Councillor McCallum was fond of "tantalizing Councillor Bissett" and Councillors Carling and Bissett "frequently had loud words" and Councillor Carling spoke "his mind in spite of everyone". The Advocate reported that Reeve Rollins would smile "to see the members getting fired up and calling each other nice names".

On one occasion, in 1947, "during the discussions there was some twitting and prodding of the council" by persons waiting upon council. This got "under Reeve Tuckey's skin" and he expressed his opinions in no uncertain terms.

Councils over the years have been responsible for providing the municipal services. Some of these services such as planning, recreation services, sanitary sewers and zoning are relatively recent, but the basic problems faced by councils over the years have remained the same. These are things like drainage, streets, roads, sidewalks, utilities, acquisition of industry, fire and police protection, relief, and so on.

The next few pages will attempt to review some aspects of municipal work. There is so much detail and so many records in a municipality that a book such as this can only briefly consider a few of these aspects.

> "Exeter can boast of having as fine a lot of firemen as any place its size in Canada, and in fact many larger towns have not got as good a lot of men. At the firemen's demonstration held in Brantford on Friday last they won additional laurels by carrying off the first prize in the international hose reel race. The distance run was five hundred yards, and they had to lay or unwind 300 feet of hose and make connection with the hydrant. Their time was 6 or 7 seconds less than that made by the other competitors. The prize is a Silver Water Tilter and two goblets, valued at $100."
>
> (Exeter Times, June 11, 1885)

The fire departments of small towns played more prominent roles in the community in those days than they do now. Uniforms, ranks, fire company names, parades and various other aspects of the fire fighting apparatus gave some color to the village. The prize that was won in Brantford was displayed on Friday, July 18, 1885 in a torch light parade led by the band and chief Robert Pickard. Unfortunately, and inexplicably, the Water Tilter and Goblets were lost in a fire at the Goderich Airport some years ago. They were deposited in the Library but were removed somehow after the war.

There is no information about fires or fire companies in the years before Exeter was incorporated as a village. It is known that in 1870 Exeter acquired from London the old 'Rescue' fire engine for $170. No information is available regarding this, other than the fact that it was acquired. Two fire companies existed in Exeter for several decades. These companies existed in the 1870's but, again, it is not clear when the companies were formed. Both companies were well established in 1875. The Rescue Fire Company No. 1 was located in the north end of Exeter in a building owned by Digory Braund immediately west of his blacksmith shop. The Rescue Company wore red uniforms with red fire caps and big black belts. The Defiance Fire Company No. 2 had a larger engine and the men wore royal purple jackets, red fire hats, and big black belts. In 1875 the Rescue Company had Captain Sanders at the head and the Defiance Company had Captain McGloghlon.

Some of the other members of the Defiance Company in 1875 were J. W. Lambrooke, S. Oke, A. Sheere, D. Johns, W. Buckingham, George Heyman, C. Brimacombe, J. Evans, B. Shaddock, M. Eacrett, C. Harton, T. A. McConnell, C. Bissett, W. Kerslake, W. Carling, A. McDonald, E. Shute, Silas Sweet, W. Treble, Richard Luxton, I. Handford. In 1876 William Treble became Captain of the Defiance Company, Joseph Orr was First Lieutenant and David Johns was Second Lieutenant, William Southcott was leading hoseman. George Mace was chief engineer.

The fire companies were elaborately organized with various rules and regulations. From time to time the minutes of the Defiance Company reveal dismissals, admissions and fines, according to the by-laws of the company. For example, in September 1876 W. J. Carling was expelled from the Defiance Company on a motion of Richard Luxton and William Buckingham. A few weeks later it was decided that "J. B. Seram is a fit and proper person to become a member of Defiance Fire Company No. 2". Another entry reveals how Seth Balsden was fined 25¢ in December, 1876 for "neglecting to help to take the engine home on the night of the last fire".

The officers of the Defiance Company for three selected years are given below to illustrate the rank structure of the company.

1877

Captain — William Treble
First Lieutenant — Joseph Orr
Second Lieutenant — James Dew
Secretary-Treasurer — George Willis
Foreman of the Leading Hose — Isaac Handford
Assistant Foreman of the leading Hose — J. Handford
Leading Hosemen — J. Crocker, R. Luxton
Suction Hosemen — W. Southcott, W. Kerslake, A. McDonald, W. Buckingham, J. H. Lambrooke
Others — Charles Eacrett, E. Gill, Richard Bissett

1882

Captain — W. Treble
First Lieutenant — E. Howard
Second Lieutenant — T. Weekes
First Branchman — I. Handford
Second Branchman — F. Howard
Secretary Treasurer — D. Spicer
Foreman of the Leading Hose — T. Crocker
Assistant Foreman of the Leading Hose — G. Hill
Leading Hosemen — W. Stewart, W. Sutton, P. Johns, D. Davis, W. Westcott
Suction Hosemen — J. Cudmore, W. Cann, W. Creech

1900

Captain — Samuel Sweet
First Lieutenant — Silas Handford
Second Lieutenant — William Creech
Secretary Treasurer — George E. Anderson
First Branchman — Eli Snell
Second Branchman — John Rendel
Third Branchman — Samuel Poplestone
Fourth Branchman — A. Bagshaw
Foreman of the Hose — James Taylor
Assistant Foreman of the Hose — G. E. Anderson
Suction Hoseman — Albert Ford

As we mentioned above, then, there were two fire companies in Exeter. The Defiance Company was probably formed in 1873 when Exeter was incorporated and the Rescue Company may have been formed in the years before incorporation. Apparently the first fire hall was located south-west of the Exeter United Church. The year of its erection is unknown. It may have been 1870 since the Rescue engine was acquired then. A lock-up or jail was evidently located in this building also. What Exeter used for fire fighting before the purchase of the Rescue engine is also unknown, although, the bucket and ladder system was probably the technique used to fight early fires.

The first bell in Exeter was found in this James Street fire hall and was rung in the early years by Constable Gill at 6 a.m., 7 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m., and 6 p.m. When the town hall was built the old fire hall was sold to Dr. Browning. It was also used for a time by the Salvation Army as a hall.

The North End fire hall was built shortly after incorporation, possibly in 1875. The second fire engine, the Defiance, was acquired. It was considered necessary to have two fire stations and engines because the village was rather spread out. The North End hall was erected on the Ramsay property and Jim Ramsay rang the bell there. The site of this North End hall was later the site of Moses Amy's house. The hall was later moved to Digory Braund's property where it remained until 1933 when it was demolished.

The members of the fire companies took great pride in their appearance, in their skill, and in the efficient working of the pump. In order to acquire funds for their uniforms and equipment, the companies held concerts and engaged in other forms of fund raising. People also made donations to the company. For example, in 1877 Eldred Drew gave $30.00 to the companies. Grateful citizens often made donations, for example, an advertisement in the 1870's read "the Exeter Fire Companies return thanks to John White and Sons for their liberal donations". Firemen had saved the Times' office. Competitions among fire companies from various towns often resulted in money prizes which added to the company's income. Council supported the companies to the extent that the municipality bought the engines and built the stations and provided so much money per man. For 1873 to 1880 the amount seems to have been $2.00. In 1880 the firemen decided to ask for $5.00 per man and they threatened to resign if they did not get the increase. From time to time the firemen would ask council for some financial help in purchasing new uniforms or hats or belts. This was done in 1878 when both companies got new uniforms and paraded through the village on July 1 showing off their fire fighting finery.

The men practiced regularly and an item in the Times of April 5, 1877 reads:

> "No. 2 Company engaged in practice with their engine "Defiance" on Monday evening last. The water was taken from the tank at the corner of Main and Huron Streets. The engine was in good working order, and threw the water considerably higher than the roof of the Mansion House".

Fires were always a threat and the frequent practice kept the men in good shape to fight the fires. Of course, the regular meetings and practices were social activities as well. The men, however, did have to be in good shape. The two fire engines were hand pumpers and were pulled to fires by the firemen. The first two men to arrive at the engine house took the tongue until the Lieutenants arrived and the others took the drag ropes. Sometimes a horse was used because in October 1877 the Times noted that Engine No. 2 rushed to a fire with "a splendid horse belonging to James Pickard" providing the locomotion for the engine. But most of the time the men pulled the engine to the fire and strenuously worked the pump to throw the water when they reached the fire. The water came from wells or from strategically located tanks which were constructed under the streets at various corners.

There were a number of fires in 1875 and 1876. So many in fact

that the Times suspected an "incendiary" Carling's store nearly burned in 1875 but the fire was discovered in time by Isaac Carling The Times hoped that "steps will be taken by Council at its next meeting to preserve the village from a recurrence of what might have been a holocaust" On the night of June 17, 1875 Kirkpatrick's Woollen Mill burned down The Times felt that it was "probably caused by one of the many strangers who are now prowling around"

In February, 1876 the Times reported as follows

> "The fiery fiend seems to have taken its lodging here for the present On Tuesday night about nine o'clock Welsh's Carriage Shop was discovered to be on fire A rush was made for the "Defiance" which again did splendid and noble work It arrived however too late to save the building but just in time to save the Crocker livery stable Messrs Dyer, Spicer and Handford at the hose worked like heroes The Rescue must not be overlooked She and her brave brigade came from Exeter North to the assistance of the "Defiance" and both men and engine deserve high encomiums of praise"

The stable of the Union Hotel also burned in 1876 but on the Saturday night in question the "Defiance" again was "speedily on the ground" and through George Willis' foresight in locating a well to feed the engine the hotel itself was saved The cry of fire in the village and the sounding of the bell was heard several other times in 1876 M Eacrett's house nearly burned when a mattress caught fire from the adjacent stove pipe John Willis' barn burned in a spectacular fire fanned by a strong east wind The house was saved by the "strenuous exertions of the willing and faithful" firemen The "Rescue" came down from the North End but the pump failed It was discovered that a large stone had been driven into the nozzle "by someone" The Times suspected "foul play"

Fortunately none of these fires were disastrous Indeed, Exeter has been extremely fortunate over the years in that few fires of disastrous proportions have occurred Many small towns have suffered the loss of the Main Street or a major industry but Exeter's fires have been kept under control before spreading Industries have burned, such as Dyer and Howard's mill worth $7000 , which burned in 1901, the woollen mill and the flax mill, but these fires did not affect the whole town On February 15, 1879, MacNabb's Bending Factory burned It had burned two years before but MacNabb had rebuilt In April, 1878 he had become insolvent MacNabb sold it and various financial arrangements were made which, said the Times, "the people generally could not understand" According to the Times, two attempts were made to burn the factory before the successful fire occurred on February 15, 1879 The Times sarcastically reported that one of the supposed owners, a Mr Keene, when awakened and told that his factory was on fire "got up — in about an hour". It was further reported that Mr. Keene and his men worked "vigorously" to save a pile of spoke timber. Each man carried one of those "heavy pieces of timber (about two feet long and two inches in diameter) . . . laid it gently on the ground and returned slowly for another". A hearing was held to investigate the fire. Dr. Hyndman presided over the 17 man jury in an attempt to find out "who done it". T. McCallum testified that he had told several people that he "feared they meant to burn it as (he) could see no way they were going to make money out of it otherwise". The long report of the hearing indicated that it had certainly been burned by someone who hoped to gain from the insurance. This was not the first, nor the last such fire in Exeter.

The flax mill fire occurred on May 9, 1921. It started about noon and "before anything could be done the building was a mass of flames". The fire could have been very widespread since a "brisk breeze" was blowing sparks for long distances. A dozen other buildings caught fire but the firemen prevented the loss of three structures. The loss was valued at $10,000. In 1925 a large frame storage building belonging to the flax mill burned with 2000 bushels of flax, 20 tons of upholstery and 26 loads of unscutched flax straw plus wagons and equipment.

Probably the most serious fire in Exeter occurred on June 17, 1920 when "four frame barns in the business section were destroyed by fire". The fire "seriously threatened the main business portion of the town. The fire started in a stable belonging to W. J. Statham at the rear of his store. It rapidly spread to several other buildings . . . It was only by the strenuous efforts of the firemen, assisted by bucket brigades" that kept the loss to only four barns. The other barns were those owned by C. T. Brooks, express agent, F. Wood, butcher, and E. Willis. Buildings all over the Main Street area, including the frame stable of J. G. Jones, Southcott's warehouse, Heaman's warehouse, and others were ignited by sparks but the fires were quickly put out. Mr. Statham's and Mr. Makins' ice houses had the roofs burned. This fire, which could have destroyed much of the Main Street was started by two boys who were in Statham's barn looking for two young pups. The boys lit a match which ignited some straw and the flames spread quickly.

As far as is known only one person ever died in a fire in Exeter. This tragedy occurred in April, 1937 when Mrs. A. J. Little was burned in a fire in Exeter North. Her three small grandchildren and her two sons escaped.

In December, 1899 there was a $7,000 fire in the Exeter Electric Light and Power Company plant. Below is a description of this fire:

> "At an early hour on Sunday morning, presumably three o'clock, fire broke out in the Electric Power House owned by Tremaine and Snell, and before noticed, the entire building was almost gutted ... the construction of the building confined the force of the flames within the walls and thus prevented the Metropolitan Hotel and J. P. Ross' store across the street, from igniting. The intense heat, however, cracked J. P. Ross' fine plate glass front, as well as a large number of windows in the hotel ... About nine o'clock the roof came in and the heavy walls fell, leaving the large building an almost total wreck ... The origin of the fire is a mystery ... We learn that the Company will rebuild at once, and in order that the town may not experience any prolonged inconvenience from loss of the lights, it is proposed to place dynamos in some factories and connect the various circuits at once."

In 1901, Digory Braund's blacksmith shop burned; in 1906 A. J. Rollins' grain warehouse burned when it was ignited by a spark from a locomotive.

One of the most tragic fires in the area occurred outside Exeter at Sodom in 1923 when Silas Stanlake's house burned. In this fire, six persons died. This fire is described below in the words of the Advocate report.

> "A most disastrous fire occurred at the home of Silas Stanlake three miles west of Exeter on Friday night, about 11:30 o'clock, when in some manner his home caught on fire after the family had retired, and his wife, Maud Marie Porter, aged 38, his brother Albert Stanlake, aged 46 and four of his five children, Clarence, Audrey, aged 12, Charlie aged 9, Wilfred, aged 4, and Arthur Gilbert, a babe of three weeks were either suffocated or burned to death ... Mr. Stanlake went downstairs, and was horrified to find the kitchen in flames. He immediately called to the family to get up and come downstairs, while he attempted to put out the fire by getting a fire extinguisher which hung in the kitchen. Immediately, however the main portion of the house burst into flames and it was impossible for Mr. Stanlake to get up the stairs to rescue those in the upper storey ... The remains were recovered and these were taken to the funeral parlors of Mr. M. E. Gardiner, Exeter from which place the funeral took place on Sunday afternoon, to the Exeter cemetery. The service was conducted by Rev. A. A. Trumper and a great many people gathered in the opera house to pay their last respects to the deceased. The cause of the fire still remains a mystery and probably always will."

A fire bug or an "incendiary" was at work in Exeter in May, 1895. J. P. Ross' store next to the Metropolitan Hotel was burned:

> "The fire was of incendiary origin and had been started in five different places by some one familiar with the premises. As all the outer doors were locked, as left by Mr. Ross, an investigation revealed the means of access to the building by the firebug. A trap door leading to the coal oil cellar under the storehouse was opened ... The fire was carefully kindled in two places in the business office, and under one of the counters and in the storehouse several barrels upon which had

> been piled a bunch of brooms saturated with turpentine, were also fired . . . The attempt to burn the premises was a bold one The motive for the deed is a mystery, as Mr Ross knows of no enemy holding sufficient malice to commit such a daring deed"

Also in 1895 fire destroyed the Main Street Methodist Church The description of the fire appeared in the March 28, 1895 issue of the Times This fire was thought to have been set by a firebug as well

> "Sunday morning about quarter to four o'clock the citizens were aroused from their peaceful slumbers by the ringing of the fire alarm The fire had gained such headway before being discovered by the neighbours that it required no speculation on the part of any to locate the scene The bright reflection from the already enveloped building woke the neighbours, and by the time the alarm was sounded the roof had gone in and the flames were ascending high into the tower The fire companies were soon on hand, but all attention was directed to the saving of the sheds and adjacent buildings, which, during the progress of the fire, ignited several times, and it was with difficulty and with great labour that the residences of Capt Kemp and Will Folland on the next street were saved from the destructing element Large cinders were carried for half a mile It is presumed that the fire was of incendiary origin no light or fire having been used in the church since the preceding Friday, but to conceive a motive for the act is an impossibility since the church was in a prosperous condition
> The building was burned to the ground, not a vestige of wood used in its construction being left, and even the heavy walls crumbled and fell"

In August of 1894 "swamp fires were causing uneasiness in Exeter having reached the bush, just west of the station" Fortunately these fires did not reach the village but they did burn out large areas of the swamp

In recent years serious fires have been kept to a minimum in Exeter Helge Jensen's woodworking plant burned in 1948, the Huron Lumber Company burned in 1954, and the Exeter Cooperative burned, to name a few Probably the worst fire in recent decades was the New Years' Eve fire at the Exeter Produce Plant

Over the years, then, Exeter has been rather more fortunate than many other Ontario towns and villages as far as fires are concerned While there have been serious blazes which destroyed individual buildings no fire has swept through a section of the town Many Ontario centres have had fires which destroyed whole sections of the community

The fire-fighting apparatus which the town originally had has been mentioned; That is, the Rescue and the Defiance engines In 1891, a hook and ladder vehicle was added About the turn of the century a steam fire engine was purchased; the old Rescue pumper was traded in on this vehicle The "steamer" had an upright boiler type of engine which burned wood This apparatus could throw water to the top of the James Street Church steeple The steam pumper obviated the necessity of the exhausting hand pumping but it was still propelled down the village streets by man power, although the occasional horse was forced into service

In 1927 a motor driven engine was purchased from London and in 1944 a new truck was purchased There was only one fire station in Exeter by that time In recent years a fire agreement with the adjacent townships has resulted in the acquisition of more modern fire fighting apparatus

Water supply for fire fighting came from private wells or from tanks which were located on most Main Street corners and on several back street corners For example, a large tank was built at the corner of Andrew and Victoria Streets to provide protection for the school This tank was installed in 1902 by Peter Bawden and measured 12' x 24' x 10' It cost $273 Evidently in 1904 this tank was enlarged to 31½' in length and had a well 3' x 3' x 2' at one end

In 1895 Council was asked to construct a tank at the Metropolitan Hotel corner Since "the salt water used by the firemen is most destructive to everything it touches" It is not clear what the source of this salt water was that the firemen used at this corner

Water mains began to appear about 1901 and in 1909 the stand pipe was constructed and the dam was rebuilt Gradually a network of water mains using water from the river provided improved fire protection to the village

The Rescue Fire Company No 1, 1896

Firemen were called at first by bells on the old fire hall and on the north end fire hall In 1884 Council bought a new bell from a firm in Troy, New York for $300 It weighed 1500 pounds and "Council was at a loss" to know what to do with it or where to place it since it was too heavy for either fire hall.

After the new town hall was built in 1887 the bell erected in the tower of this building called the firemen to their posts.

In 1902 a steam whistle was placed on the grist mill across from the town hall. In 1903 Council experimented with the steam whistle using it instead of the bell for the daily time signals at 6, 7, 12, 1 and 6 o'clock but the Times disapproved saying it "had the effect of frightening horses". Fortunately the use of the cacophonous whistle was discontinued and the use of the bell restored. In 1944 the siren was placed in the Town Hall.

In so far as organization goes the old fire companies were disbanded by Council and a new fire department organized under Chief William Treble. The old companies continued to operate, however, much as before. In the 1890's James Weekes was appointed Chief, he remained Chief for forty years until the 1930's, he was on the fire department for over fifty years. A number of others served on the fire department for many years as well. Ed Treble served fifty years until 1946. Richard Davis retired in 1946 after forty-eight years. Others with long service were Herb Ford, Jack Norry, Sid Sanders, M. Quance, Walter Cunningham, Louis Day, Algoe Sanders, Irwin Ford, Frank Creech, and Ernest Wells.

The present volunteer Fire Brigade is still called Defiance Company, No. 2.

Police protection has always been a municipal responsibility since the passage of the Baldwin Act. In Exeter the first police service was provided by an officer who was designated as Constable and Street Commissioner. Probably the first man appointed to this office was John Gill. Gill had come from Cornwall, England to Canada in 1856 settling first in Whitby and coming to Exeter about 1858. Gill may have been appointed Constable before Exeter was incorporated but it is likely that he was appointed in 1873 by the Village Council. Gill remained on the job throughout the 1870's and 1880's. He received a salary of $50.00 a year as bailiff and constable. Alfred A. Bowey was another early Constable in Exeter. James Creech served as Chief Constable and Street Commissioner from the early 1880's until 1902. Creech's duties included those in the following list:

1) Patrol streets until midnight
2) Clean the town hall
3) Perform duties of sanitary inspector
4) Enforce the village by-laws
5) Ring the town bell at 6 a.m., 7 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m., 6 p.m., 7 p.m., and 9 p.m. curfew if required by Council
6) Collect the Statute Labor commutations
7) Light the street lamps.

Creech had to post a bond and in 1887 he received a salary of $325.00 for the year. In 1887 Constable Creech dealt with the usual police matters. The safe in the Verity Plow Works was blown. The Station House was robbed and horses were stolen from the Commercial Hotel livery stable. Burglaries occurred from time to time and in one week, three stores were burglarized in 1891. Other robberies included such things as cow thefts, orchard thefts, shoplifting and, commonly, timber thefts from Canada Company lands. An example of this last item occurred in 1876 when John Ironsides a Company agent brought timber thieves before Justice of the Peace George Willis. Constable Creech also had to deal with drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, and rowdyism. He was called upon by the Times to do something about "loafers" on the streets making "rude remarks to ladies". "Gyps" passed through town from time to time and took the village folk for a few dollars. The Constable also had to control dogs, cows, and all manner of other animals on the loose. Noise in the streets drew complaints. Teams with improper bells on the sleighs, and fast driving on the streets drew the Times' criticism. Why, people drove at twice the legal limit of 7 mph and the Constable was laughed at! Disgraceful! "This furious driving on Main Street should be put an end to! " said the Times. In 1878 the Times had observed that some Usborne men had been brought before Squire Gidley, the Justice of the Peace, to answer for their fast driving, and "unseemly and riotous conduct". A "few more offenders should be seriously dealt with' commented the Times.

Boys were a constant problem for Constable Creech. Indeed, they were a constant problem for his predecessors and have been a continuous problem for his successors. They jumped on sleighs and wagons, they stole, they shot peas, they played in the streets. Indeed, in 1884, Council passed a by-law prohibiting the playing of lacrosse, kicking football, throwing snowballs, or any other missile on village streets. The Times' headline read "BEWARE BOYS". There were a number of letters in the Advocate concerning "the boys". The theme of half of the letters was "what are we going to do with our boys?" And this half of the correspondence dealt with the behaviour of the "boys" which concerned the older generation. "Improper conduct, improper language, cigarette smoking, tobacco chewing and drinking" were some of the activities which were being indulged in by the boys and which drew the wrath of the older folk. People also commented on the boys' laziness, destructiveness and lounging around the streets. In other words the older generation criticized the boys for doing the same things that every generation of boys indulges in, and which somehow become more evil when you pass a certain age.

Some of the boys replied. Parts of two letters are quoted below:

> "I am one of those boys who have been so swiftly sliding down the road that leads to the teetotal destruction of body, mind and soul. . . . To judge from the words of those writers we have been guilty of all the crimes in the calendar. . . . Did you ever hear two old gentlemen talk about their doings in their younger days . . . . They tell stories of depredations, destruction of property, satisfying of lusts etc., for which a boy now would spend some nights in the "cooler" or be made pay a fine. Yet they dare talk about the boys of today being altogether foul and sinful. . . . What must the world outside of our village think of our boys and girls? People will think of us as they did of the Donnellys some years ago. . . . "Do not go near Exeter 'least thy purity be contaminated by its foul atmosphere and thy good name blasted forever" . . . I know that the boys are not so bad as pictured. Wherein are we so bad? It seems to be more particularly in the smoking of cigarettes and the drinking of liquor. By whom are those articles sold? Are there any boys selling them? Is there no law against it? . . . If the boys could not get cigarettes or liquor they would not desire them. And is not the seller a man, not a boy?

Another letter read:

> "I am one of the bad boys of Exeter of whom so many unkind and hard things have been written of late. . . . Are Exeter girls and boys worse than the girls and boys of other towns? . . . How is it that we are permitted to remain at large? . . . In the meantime, Mr. Editor, will you kindly point out a few of the grey-haired saints of the village, not the church goers, but the saints. If peradventure there be one, who is he that we may emulate his example? We hear the old people swearing, lying or backbiting their neighbours, we see them fighting or struggling, one with the other to the end that one may succeed and the other fail — on the David Harum principles of "Do unto the other fellow what he would do to you if he got a chance, and see that you get in the first crack." . . . How about the old rascals in and out of our churches who justify the ballot box stuffers, the ballot switchers, and would our girls and boys burn the West Elgin ballots and swear that they knew nothing about the burning? No Sir, we would not, yet we see our parents, preachers and all upholding such conduct and winking at all sorts of political hypocrisy. . . . The open hearted, free, generous, rollicking girls and boys of Exeter, refuse to be slandered by any bumptious newspaper monitor — and slandered I maintain we have been most shamefully."

Various solutions were presented by some of the village philosophers to the problem of what to do with the boys. Selections from some of these solutions are offered below, for the edification of the present generation of boys:

> "Physical culture as well as general morals should take a decided place in our school curriculum. The suggestion that a shed be erected on the school grounds, is an excellent one and I hope that the trustees

> will carry it out It would save the school, give room for drilling boys and girls, serve as a play room in wet, hot or stormy weather, be used for general picnics and built so that both compartments could be thrown into one, serve as a splendid hall for summer meetings of a public character ... What about the most dangerous period of a boy's life from sixteen to twenty-one years? The ordinary village or town life, does not present sufficient or harmless allurement to prevent boys and even girls from running after harmful ones There are prayer meetings, league meetings, endeavor meetings, class meetings, special meetings, Bible meetings etc , etc , almost every night of the week. But the average boy of today does not take such a deep and absorbing interest in those as to compel his attendance ... It appears to us that had the boys a common meeting ground such as a large room ... It would simply be a boys' club room ... Let the boys practically run their own show, on certain lines Appoint weekly one of themselves, as Censor to see the rules carried out No gambling, no filthy foul or objectionable language reasonable hours and proper order One night a week to be devoted to a debate by the boys themselves ...

Another letter writes

> "I agree ... spending your evenings in self-culture, such as debating on the questions of the day Music also is very essential to a young man's education You have your field games in summer for physical exercise and amusement, your skating rink for the same purpose in the winter and there are the churches with all their elevating and refining influences Now I think you want something more substantial than another playhouse. I think the parents of Exeter would rather contribute five hundred dollars each to the building of a large factory than five dollars to another place of amusement, as the former would give openings for bookkeepers typewriters, superintendents, engineers, business managers, shipping clerks, travelling salesmen, and an army of employees, and Exeter could man every position with their own boys"
>
> "It is a common thing to notice on our streets small boys of different ages indulging in the use of tobacco some chewing, some smoking cigarettes, some cigars and others a pipe This certainly should not be and it would seem as though those dealing in the weed have little or no knowledge of the law regarding its sale to minors" (It was illegal to dispense tobacco in any form to a person under eighteen years of age)

So the boys were, indeed, a problem for the constables Constable Gill, in 1878 tried to stop the boys from insulting the ladies and "horsing" around on the Commons on Sunday afternoon One fall night during these same years "A bovine of the feminine gender, with a dozen or so old tins attached to her caudal appendage, made Sunday night hideous by the clattering" The boys were at it again! Even the very young lads were not above the occasional burglary as the following item from an issue of the 1875 Times illustrates

"On Tuesday night last, at a late hour, as Mr T Carling was retur-

> ning home from a skating party, he saw two lads aged about nine and eleven, whose names we suppress for the parents' sake working with a shovel and trying to gain an entrance into his father's store by the cellar window".

In 1890, the Advocate suggested that "the destructiveness of the youths of Exeter is almost beyond belief". The boys broke windows in vacant houses, they threw stones at the chancel window of the "English Church", they set fire to Mrs. Murdock's green house and cut down the lamp posts on Main Street. "If the youths realize any amusement in such work the sooner they are given a few months in jail the better", said the Advocate.

Boys were not the only source of trouble, however. Young, and not so young men caused a good deal of trouble rather often. Exeter was considered to be a very rowdy town from time to time and in 1899 the following item appeared in the Times. It illustrates the problem clearly.

> "The disgraceful scene on Main Street Tuesday night, lasting for several hours, is another illustration, if any were needed, of the necessity of curbing the disposition and language of men who make our streets a place for the use of vile language and conduct unbecoming any respectable class of men. That the air of a public highway should reek with bad language is evil enough and it is time that steps were taken to prevent a repetition of the occurrence. Free speech and the right of every man to express himself publicly and privately is clearly limited by the proprieties of social intercourse and the amenities of public life, but such blasphemy as was resorted to Tuesday night is entirely out of the question. We withhold names this time but if the like occurs again we certainly shall expose the guilty parties."

Keeping an eye on "visitors" to the village was another job that had to be looked after by the constable of the town. In January, 1878 the Times commented. "There are several hard looking cases in town. Lock up carefully when you retire, lest some of these long fingered gentry should attempt an entrance". In July, 1884 the following item appeared in the Times. It, too, refers to visitors to the town and the item is quoted in its entirety because it provides some of the color of village life in the 1880's.

A Queer Lot of Vagrants"

> "On Friday afternoon last, the loungers about town were provided with a new sensation by the appearance on the streets of decidedly the oddest company which ever graced them. The party comprised two men, two women, and half a dozen or so of children. The men led each a huge brown bear, two lads of fifteen or so, each leading a smaller bear, and four monkeys trotted after the procession. The bears were mangy, and ill-groomed, the men were wild-looking, ragged and dirty, and as the men chanted a monotonous ballad in some unknown jargon, while the muzzled bears clumsily danced to the

> melody, it was hard to say whether the men or the bears deserved to rank higher in the scale of civilization. The women were ragged, dirtier, and more unkempt looking than the men, led each a pony fitted with a packsaddle, on which was piled a miscellaneous lot of camp-equipage with a couple of little children stacked on top of the pile, while one carried an infant in a basket slung on her hip. Two philosophizing looking donkeys, one bearing a load of bundles, so big that only its nose and tail were visible, brought up the rear. The men, the women, the bears, the girls, and the children, all begged assiduously and persistently, from the spectators, and the only self-respecting members of the cavalcade were the donkeys, who looked very much as if they were in the procession solely in discharge of a disagreeable duty and were themselves ashamed of the whole thing. The party, by their appearance, dress, and equipage, appeared to be Bohemian and Hungarian gypsies, but in a few words of English, which they had at command, professed to have come from European Turkey. If they really were from Turkey, they had failed to acquire respect for that text of the Mohammedan religion which enjoins abstinence from strong drink, for the whole party, men and women, appeared to take as naturally to the curse of Canada as if they have been brought up on it. One of the women went into a barroom, laid down five cents for a glass of whiskey, and tossed it off as neatly as it could be done. The party camped in Murray's grove, about a mile north of here. Just before reaching their camping place, one of the crowd met with a mishap. It appears, while a lad leading one of the large bears, with a monkey mounted upon its back, was walking across a platform in order to reach the house of Mr. Alex Taylor, one of the boards flew up, precipitating all three in a heap in the ditch. The boy was somewhat injured. Saturday morning they started for Clinton to take part in the Orangemen's procession.

The type of group described above moved around the country earning a poor living and attracting much attention. Tramps caused concern as the following item indicates. This article comes from the September 14, 1893 issue of the Times.

> "The country seems to be swarming with tramps who are doing more or less stealing from farm houses and stores, and it would be a safe plan to keep a close watch on them on every occasion. Doors and windows should be properly secured at night, and if you have a dog put him on a small allowance to get him in proper training for these unwelcome guests."

Gypsies passed through town from time to time as well.

Gill and Creech, then, were kept busy. In July 1888, Gill arrested a counterfeit gang member named Ben Mackenzie and Creech picked up a local citizen named John V., who, as the Times said, "was becoming very popular in his special line — larceny". He had stolen a watch from the bartender of the Central Hotel. Another of the Constable's jobs in these years was the "removal of indigent persons to the County Poorhouse", also known as the

Huron County House of Refuge

In July 1902, James Creech was either fired or resigned as Constable, Street Commissioner and Collector It seems that Council had apparently considered the possibility of replacing Creech. Thomas Bissett had applied for the job in 1894 saying that "Mr Creech has been a good servant, though performing nothing that would entitle him to a life lease of the office " Bissett had offered to take the job for $300 but Council decided to stick with Creech at a $365 salary Tom Bissett was incensed and demanded an explanation from Council for robbing the village of $65. Council, he felt, was being negligent in its duties

In any event, Creech was finally replaced by Wesley J. Bissett at $365 a year in July of 1902 Bissett's duties were similar to those performed by Creech Bissett was on the job in the fall of 1902 when the Council and the School Board disagreed over who was to pay for Halloween damage at the school The Board said Council should pay since the village was responsible for protection to persons and property. Council, of course, replied that it had hired three extra Constables and that was all it could do

Bissett received just as much criticism as his predecessors and as much as his successors would receive since village or small town police seldom please everyone People complained in 1909 about cows and hogs wandering loose But Bissett and Council did nothing despite the 1908 Cow By-law which required that cows be herded from 7 a m to 7 p m Under this by-law, cow-owners had to hire a man to collect the villagers' cows The herder usually took the cows along the roadsides outside of the town But cows still wandered at large and Thomas Brock complained that Constable Bissett had placed his cow in the town yards and thereby prevented the cow from returning home Animals were frequently the cause of problems for the police In 1891 the Advocate demanded a by-law prohibiting dogs from running at large Useless "dogs should be taken to the woods and quietly shot" said the editor In the Fall of 1891 "nefarious" hen roost robbers were detected They were employees of the salt well and had been stealing chickens at night They "skipped" town when warrants for their arrest were issued

Once in a while Bissett pleased someone In March, 1909, he caught the boys who had "thrown eggs at Principal L. C Fleming's house" He also locked up William B. for failing to provide the "necessaries of life for his family" By 1915 Bissett was earning $525 per year By 1920 he received $750 He had tried in 1919 to reduce the rowdyism on Main Street perhaps successfully since he got a raise He had not, however, caught the spring time "peeping tom" who put a ladder up to bedroom windows to see what he could see!

Wes Bissett remained on the job until 1930 when he died at the

age of 76 having served as Chief Constable and Street Commissioner for nearly 30 years.

Bissett was succeeded by John Clark Norry who was appointed Chief Constable and Street Commissioner in 1930. Norry had come to Exeter in 1896 and had been employed by the Sutherland and Innes Company in their stave factory. He had worked for the village laying cement walks in 1909 and had worked on the paving of Main Street in 1920. Norry was reputed to be an expert in the installation of drains and he is supposed to have known where every drain in the village was located. Norry died in 1961 at the age of 84, he served as Constable for 23 years until 1953.

In 1931 William Wareing was appointed as village night watchman and was later made night constable with full police status. He served until 1950 when he resigned saying "There's no use asking me to stay because I can't live on $27.50 a week".

Over the more recent years the Exeter police force has been gradually expanded to five men who can be accurately described as professionals and whose duties no longer include collection of various taxes, ringing the town hall bell, cleaning the hall, and so on.

Another municipal agency was the Board of Health. The Board was possibly constituted in the 1870's but the first records date from 1886. The Board in that year consisted of the Reeve Dr Rollins, the Clerk, M. Eacrett, J. P. Clarke and Thomas McCallum. By way of illustrating the work of the Board the following cases are noted from the 1886 records. The Board had two officers to whom it delegated responsibilities. The Medical Officer of Health was Dr Lutz and the Sanitary Inspector was James Creech.

In February, 1886, George Willis complained about an "offensive stable" owned by John Wood. Willis appeared before the Board saying that "he would be compelled to remove from his house if it were continued". William Grigg reported "that the odour from the stable was such as to cause a sickening sensation". The Board of Health held a court of inquiry in Fanson's Hall and found Wood innocent of having an offensive or harmful condition at his stable.

The Board dealt with water closets, privys (which had to be 100 feet from the house), disposal of slops, disposal of excreta from privy vaults and similar items. In their end-of-the-year report the 1886 Board said "we have endeavoured to discharge our duty faithfully and some of it has not been the pleasantest". Indeed, it probably was not.

Over the years until the 1920's or 30's when the Board was dissolved it dealt with complaints about the creek which was in an "extraordinary unsanitary condition". On September 1, 1887, the

Times contained the following editorial. It is quoted at length because it presents a good picture of conditions.

> "The health of the southern part of the village is not now nor has it for years been as good as it might be, it falls far short of being as free from fever and other germs, as is the centre and northern part of the place. Whatever the cause may be, the residents along Huron and Ann Streets have for years been the victims of typhoid fever, the majority of which, if not all, being endemical cases. Why should this be? There appears to be every reason that we should have one of the healthiest places in the Province in which to live. Where the land is well drained, we never hear of a case of endemic sickness. What sickness there is is confined to that portion of the village lying south of Ann Street, where we understand the sanitary regulations are not of the best. The land lies low and is poorly drained, which together with the recent climatic conditions rendered that district more liable to such diseases. But the real and more prevalent cause of typhoid fever is filth, and if there is any one place in the village where filth accumulates faster than another, it is in the cesspool or open drain which crosses Main Street in the vicinity above mentioned. For years there has been an accumulation of debris in this drain, which becoming stagnate impregnates the air in its precincts with fever germs, and not until this drain is covered or regularly cleaned out will the neighbourhood be free from diseases caused by such nuisances. If the Board of Health do not feel inclined or prepared to grapple with it, the Council should look into the matter, and nothing should be left undone or unattempted to correct the existing evils. We are only voicing the sentiments of the public when we ask for an immediate and effective investigation into the cause of the fever sickness in the southern part of the village."

Not only the creek but the Ausable River area was used as a dumping ground from the very early years. In the 1890's the Times complained:

> "The southern banks of the 'Sauble river are made to present a disgraceful sight, by their being used as a dumping ground for all kinds of debris. The Board of Health should take the matter in hand and have the practice stopped, not only from a health standpoint, but to reclaim a pleasant leisure walk along the river. The citizens are not to blame for the disgraceful state of the river banks as this is the only spot where refuse can be dumped, and it must be dumped somewhere. On the council falls the onus of blame, as repeatedly it has been suggested that they purchase a hole somewhere where such matter can be deposited, far enough out to be of nuisance to no one. We would suggest that a lot in the old gravel pit on the lake road, be purchased from Mr. A. McDonnell. The holes there are of little value to the owner, but would make a splendid dumping ground."

The Board was concerned about diseases like typhoid which was very prevalent in 1888. Smallpox, measles, scarlet fever, indeed, all communicable diseases concerned the Board. Unsanitary conditions contributed to disease and the Board did its best to have the "removal of excreta from privy vaults" done carefully, to have drains, cesspools, wells, garbage, slaughterhouses, disposal of offal, sale of meat and many other things looked after properly, but people were very careless and did not respond well to requests to prevent various forms of contamination

The Medical Officer of Health visited infected houses and disinfected them as described below:

> "The Board of Health have purchased an apparatus for the disinfection of houses after diptheria, scarlet fever, consumption, etc A new disinfectant formaldehyde is used. A room and its contents exposed to the vapor from it for four or five hours are found to be completely freed from germs of any infectious or contagious disease Sulphur has not been found to be satisfactory for this purpose. so the Board following suggestions from the Provincial Board purchased this machine, which already has been found to work well, and will be of inestimable value in preventing the spread of disease. Not alone is it useful after infectious diseases but of great use in removing and destroying bad odors, etc., which sometimes penetrate or exist in some dwellings"

Smallpox appeared from Time to time and caused the town some concern as it did in 1913 The following items illustrate this concern

> "As the Board of Health View the Situation"
>
> "We wish to state facts in connection with the smallpox scare in Exeter From January last a few of the children have had what their parents called chicken pox In most cases no physician was called But where one was called in, in every case but one the Dr pronounced the case chicken pox and quite mild at that That case was a grandson of Ex Reeve John Taylor In that case the Dr called was suspicious of smallpox He called in Dr McNally District M H O He withheld his decision on the case but called in Dr Bell, Provincial M H O. He examined four cases and pronounced the severest as one of the semi-confluent type of smallpox Some of the doctors still maintain that it is only chicken-pox Be that as it may young Taylor is improving every day The local Board of Health at once proceeded to quarantine, disinfect and clean up the town of every suspicion Exeter, so far as the scare is concerned, is just as safe to enter and leave as it ever was There is no danger whatever"
>
> W J Heaman Reeve
> A Quackenbush M D M H O
> H E Huston Chairman
>
> "The Smallpox Scare"
>
> "Exeter is in quarantine travellers skipped the town on the first freight, express or democrat wagon, anything or everything to get out in a hurry Passengers getting off at London from the L H & B are undergoing the strictist scrutiny and vermin reigns, the only thing lacking is that we are not dying off by the wholesale, according to the

> city dailies But according to inside information there are but a few houses in town quarantined, business is going on in its normal way, medical men are of different opinions as to most of the cases that are being placarded but in any event every precaution is being taken even to the point of ridiculousness in the minds of some, to protect both the citizens and those coming to town If it is smallpox it isn't going much further but will leave town in a hurry if the Board of Health and citizens have their way
>
> For several weeks what was diagnosed as chickenpox and what a great many still think was chickenpox has been prevalent in town, among the small children Smallpox was first suspected in the case of Reginald Taylor, 12 year old grandson of Mr John Taylor Mr McNally of Owen Sound district Health Officer, was called in but he refused to pronounce the case as it seems several of the symptoms of smallpox were lacking Dr McNally in turn sent for Dr Bell Provincial Health Officer Dr Bell visited four homes and pronounced it smallpox Steps were at once taken to have all homes where chickenpox had been treated quarantined
>
> A meeting of the Board of Health and School Board was called and it was decided to take every precaution The school, churches, skating rink and bowling alley were closed up The Board of Health are wise in taking these steps as it ensures safety not only to our townspeople but those who are coming into town The fact that all homes where the disease has been suspected is being thoroughly disinfected and every precaution is being taken ensures safety to all The disease has been among the children and some cases have been traced back for two months but all have had to undergo the ordeal of fumigation The quarantine on most of the places will be lifted this week
>
> Public vaccination is being held at the Town Hall and all school children must be vaccinated Older persons who have not been vaccinated for some time are recommended to become so at once"

Cholera was a threat from time to time, although it never appeared in epidemic proportions in Huron or indeed in Ontario after 1866 There are few records to indicate the extent of the disease in Exeter although in 1884 Dr Hyndman urged that "In view of the threatened outbreak of cholera" preventative measures be taken such as "the removal of night soil, which should be deodorized and mixed with lime and ashes" He also urged the cleaning of the creeks, backyards, wells, and other problem areas

Typhoid occurred in serious proportions 1891, for example, was a particularly bad year

In 1918, 1919, and 1920, influenza struck Exeter claiming several lives including Thomas Creech whose obituary is given below as an illustration of how the disease would claim even the young and strong

> "The death occurred on Tuesday evening, December 17th, of Thomas Garnet Creech, Canadian Express Agent at Exeter, at the age of 38

years, 2 months and 6 days The late Mr Creech had been ill only ten days of influenza following a heavy cold, which he contracted two or three days before taking his bed He was of a rugged constitution and was given every possible attention and even to the last, hope was entertained that he would recover But the disease had too firm a hold and he gradually sank "

During the epidemics the churches were closed and public gatherings were prohibited by the Board of Health The Board also advised the villagers "to keep from having the disease — keep away from those who have it if you can, build up the body by eating nourishing foods, dressing comfortably, getting lots of sleep, living in the open air and bright well ventilated rooms, disinfecting the mouth, nose and throat with chloretone or listerine, or sulphate of quinine"

Over the years, the problems dealt with by the Board of Health have gradually diminished Medicine, better sanitation, improved water supplies, control of dumping, and pure food laws, have contributed The town has secured a dumping ground which has been in use for about 20 years The dump was secured only after a lawsuit involving George Shaw and the town Animals are now controlled in town; the cow problem no longer exists There isn't a cow left within the corporation limits Indeed, there are few domestic animals left in town In 1893 in Exeter there were 1682 people, 90 dogs, 144 horses, 189 cows, 13 sheep and 80 hogs With the elimination of domestic animals the manure disposal problem disappeared and it was a problem with the horse population alone producing about one and one-half tons of manure per day The outside toilet has gone and with it the disposal problem The "honey dipper" is now a phrase from the "golden" past The open ditch which long caused a sanitation problem in the south part of the town has been closed in for most of its length A sewage system serves most of the town now and in many ways there is less obvious organic pollution now than there was in the past

Perhaps this is the logical place to mention the provision of hospital services in Exeter South Huron Hospital was opened in 1953 Prior to this various forms of hospital service had been provided in nursing homes, maternity homes, and private hospitals For example, C B Snell tried to operate a hospital in the old Pickard house which stood south of Snell Bros garage The present R Pooley house on Huron Street and the Ausable office funtioned as maternity homes Dr Hyndman had a small hospital in his office In 1944 the Charles Gidley house on William Street was willed to the village for use as a hospital After considerable debate Council declined acceptance of the house

In 1949 the Exeter Lions Club led a movement to erect a

hospital in Exeter and in that year plans for a 25 bed hospital were prepared. The proposed site was on land owned by R. E. Pooley on Huron Street East. The Lions' hospital committee which worked on the project included Elmer Bell, Chas. S. MacNaughton, Tom Pryde, Dr. Dunlop and Herb Eilber. This committee led the drive for funds. In September, 1949 the South Huron Hospital Association was formed with the following officers: E. D. Bell, Chairman, W. G. Cochrane, Treasurer, R. N. Creech, Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. Dunlop and C. S. MacNaughton.

By June of 1950 it had been decided that the hospital would be built in Riverview Park and a Board of Trustees was elected by the subscribers. E. D. Bell was named chairman of the Board. W. G. Cochrane and R. N. Creech were elected treasurer and secretary respectively. However doubts about the site continued to affect the Board's planning. "A strong movement led by Mr. Ted Buswell sought to preserve Riverview Park". Don Southcott said it was too late to save the park. Council had offered Riverview Park in 1950 to the hospital board but in view of the objections of Buswell and others, in January, 1951 Council rescinded its previous motion to deed the park to the hospital association. In February, 1951 Ted Buswell presented a petition signed by 550 Exeter citizens requesting that the Park be preserved and that the hospital be built elsewhere. E. D. Bell was disappointed saying that one "couldn't find a better site in all of Ontario". Other sites were considered including Canning Factory property and a site north of the river.

In May, 1951 the Carling property became available but it was not until November, 1951 that the Hospital Association finally decided to purchase the Carling estate and in the spring of 1952 the hospital was finally started. Financing for the project came from local subscribers, the federal and provincial governments, charitable organizations such as the Atkinson Foundation and the local municipalities. The building was opened in January, 1953. Since that time the hospital has been enlarged and improved.

The cemetery became a municipal responsibility in 1903. Council appointed a Board in 1903 consisting of Dr. Lutz, J. Senior, William Weekes, F. W. Gladman, and Thomas Prior to administer the cemetery. The Exeter Union Burial Grounds had been established in 1864 when five acres were acquired by a board of trustees. The first trustees were Thomas Gidley, A. Freeman and William Sanders. The cemetery grounds gradually deteriorated to the point in 1900 that the Times described it as a "disgrace to the Community". A group of people including John Allison made an effort to improve the grounds. In 1901 a new Board for the Exeter Union Burial Grounds was appointed. These trustees represented Exeter, Usborne, Stephen and Hay townships. The by-laws and regulations governing the Burial Grounds were drafted by Dickson and Carling and came into effect on April 11, 1901. The new Board began to improve the grounds. John Allison planted 134 spruce trees, farmers brought in top soil and men straightened the stones. A caretaker was hired by the new Board in 1901 and in 1902 a house was built for the caretaker. Exeter granted $200 towards the house. About this time, four acres were added to the original five. In 1924 another nine and three-quarter acres were acquired.

In 1903 Council assumed full responsibility for the cemetery and has appointed a Board since that time. In that year Charles Southcott left $100 towards a permanent maintenance fund for the cemetery. This was the beginning of the perpetual care fund. The Times urged others to "follow the example of the late Mr. Southcott in providing for the proper maintenance of their burial plots".

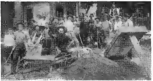
The condition of the roads, streets and sidewalks in Exeter has probably received more discussion than any other single municipal item. It is difficult to think of another topic that has brought more abuse on to the Council than the roads. In 1875 Dr. Browning told Council to get some ducks and let the ducks "eat the mud" on the streets. Browning advised Council that it was a well-known fact that ducks ate mud. In April, 1877 the Times remarked on the condition of the streets:

> "The recent thaw and warm rains have made the streets very slushy and disagreeable and some of the crossings are almost impassable for the pedestrians, many find themselves up to their knees in water and slush".

Every spring the streets would become impassable morasses of mud. Wagons would be up to their axles in mud. The Times said "if we expect good business we must accommodate the farmers with good roads". In the summer the roads became dusty and unpleasant. The streets were in their best condition in Winter when the snow made sleigh travel comfortable. Although in winter the pitch holes did make some road areas more like roller coasters than roads. For example, in February, 1897 there were over 100 pitch holes, three to four feet deep in the section of road from the river north about one mile.

Litter and filth added to the general unpleasantness of the streets. Garbage, waste, spit, manure from horses and cows accumulated. In 1904 the Advocate remarked that "the dirty, filthy practice of spitting tobacco juice on the windows and walks along Main Street is becoming altogether too common". In 1901 the Council had passed a by-law prohibiting the spitting of tobacco juice, throwing banana and orange peels, paper and other litter on the walks and roads. The WCTU asked Council to stop the practice

of spitting on the walks but Council was unable to prevent the expectoration of the rich brownish-yellow streams that stained walks and windows. In 1937 the Times-Advocate urged each person to look after his frontage and clean up the litter and to "jack up the local council" to clean up the streets. It is interesting to note that the editorial did not suggest that people should not put the garbage and litter there in the first place. In 1970 Council passed an anti-litter by-law but people are still littering.



Construction of some of the early sidewalks in Exeter. This picture was taken at the corner of John and Andrew Streets about 1900. Some of the people are: The boy is a Baskerville, George Sanders (first left), Sid Sanders (third left), Dick Seldon (rear Left), Tommy Brock (with the beard), Dr. Sweet and Flossie Sweet (in doorway), Eli Snell (white shirt and black hat in centre), Frank Mallett (hat tipped back, standing), Wes Bissett (black coat), Isaac Carling (rear, smoking pipe), Harry Jennings (with cap in front of Carling), Tom Creech (to the right and rear of Bissett), Walter Westcott (leaning on the stone hammer), Sam Sanders (stripped shirt), Al Bissett (on wagon), Sid West (far right on wagon).

Council has talked about permanent roads for the past 60 years. Main Street was the first street to be permanently surfaced and this was done in 1920 when a concrete pavement was laid 36 feet wide in the business section and 24 feet wide elsewhere. The contractor was Hollingsworth of Hamilton and the price was $41,566 with the town supplying the gravel and the roller. With the concrete surface the mud and dust problem was eliminated from the Main Street. The annual gravelling and stonebreaking on Main Street was no longer necessary. Since the very early years men would each spring dump gravel on the Main Street and proceed to break up the larger stones with stone hammers. The road work was done under the direction of the Road Commissioner. Various men

held this position over the years, Isaac Whitlock, Anthony Holland, E. R. Bissett, Richard Pincombe, W. J. Bissett, were some. Labourers like Charles Baskerville, and Silas Handford and Walter Westcott were hired casually. They broke the stone with the long hammers and spread the gravel. In 1911 these labourers got seventeen and one-half cents per hour. The teamsters drawing the gravel in their gravel boxes got 35¢ an hour. The gravel box carried a yard of gravel and was dumped by removing the floor boards. In the early years of this century Tom Creech supplied gravel for $3.45 a cord.

Street watering kept the dust down. This service was paid for on a frontage basis, by the landowners along Main Street. In 1887 the charge was 8¢ per foot. In 1886 the watering cart was operated by Albert Bissett for $2.50 per day. In 1901 it was 13¢ per foot. The work was contracted out by Council annually. In 1901 Caleb Heywood did the job. The water for the water wagon first came from the mill pond and later from a well near the Town Hall. There was a windmill pump to provide the power at this well. In later years a water line was built from the mill pond to the town hall where there was a large water storage tank. The problem of dust became worse after the auto appeared. The Advocate on June 10, 1915 made the following suggestion:

> "That our citizens realize that the dust nuisance is a real one is emphasized by the fact that so many of the back streets have petitioned to have the streets watered and we venture the guess that if the dust is kept down on all the streets petitioned for the watering cart will have a very busy season. The suggestion has been made that the town follow out the system of oiling on the streets to be watered. If the town would purchase another tank car of oil this could be done and done at a saving to the town so we understand. Besides this there is the saving of the roadbed. One great advantage the oil has is keeping down the dust on Sundays. Sunday is the day when our citizens enjoy sitting out on their lawns or verandahs and it is also a day when autos are out in numbers and on this day the water cannot keep down the dust."

But the gravelling and street watering ceased to be necessary on Main Street after 1920 and the laying of the concrete road. Also in 1920 Wellington Street was paved from Main Street to the Grand Trunk Railway depot. The farmers in the area contributed labour to the construction of this roadway since it was felt that they would benefit from having the road to the station surfaced.

The first sidewalks in the village were of course, boardwalks. The initial sidewalk construction was undertaken in 1876 when boardwalks six feet wide were constructed on both sides of Main Street from Huron to Gidley. Four foot walks were built from Gidley to the Lake Road and from Main Street to the Station. Board crossings were also constructed across Main Street at several locations to enable pedestrians to get across the mud. Around the turn of the century "granolithic" walks were being constructed to replace the plank walks. In 1901, for example, a "granolithic walk was constructed from Huron Street to the Metropolitan Hotel corner, in addition six crossings were built. The work was done by the Royal Artificial Stone Paving Company of Guelph. Council raised the money by the sale of debentures to C. H. Sanders. More "granolithic" walks were laid in 1903 on Huron Street and Victoria Street. Cows walked in the construction area damaging the freshly laid walks and adding to the cost.

The sidewalks in 1900 were still mainly plank with some new granolithic walks. A letter to the Advocate in September 1900 illustrates the feeling of the citizens about the walks:

> "As I moved down street this morning I came across many places where the sidewalks were literally flooded with tobacco juice, melon seeds and peels, banana peels, cigar stubs and ashes, and other unsightly messes, sufficient to cause nausea or even the turning of a delicate stomach. You seem to see more of these unsightly things on Saturday night, Sunday and Monday mornings, although more or less at all times. Is this not a disgrace to our town as our ladies mop up this collection of unhealthy trash with their skirts as they move along, unless they ride a wheel or wear bloomers. It is to my mind simply abominable in the extreme. Think it over and see if we can improve on this matter. I am a user of tobacco myself and I therefore know it is not necessary to stand and squirt a quart of juice in a pool on the centre of the sidewalk. . . ."

The streets were lit in the early years by gas lights. In 1884 Samuel Fanson was the lamp lighter and that year there were eight lamps in the business section which burned all night. Later on the constables took on the lamp lighting job. More is said elsewhere about the provision of street lights.

Roads continued to occupy much of Council's time. In 1928 Reeve C. B. Snell was urging the town to construct permanent roads and thereby save money over the years. Snell pointed out that during the preceding four years the village had spent $25,000 on the roads and streets. Mr. Snell felt that by debenturing funds to build permanent roads the cost would be reduced in the long run. Councils have grappled with this problem for the past 40 or 50 years and at present the town does have a number of permanently paved streets.

Much more could be said about streets and roads. A new iron bridge was built in 1888 over the Ausable. Named the "Victoria Bridge" it served the village until the winter of 1941 when it collapsed. A new bridge was erected in May of that year. We could discuss the changes on Main Street, for example, the change to angle parking with the removal of the old curbs in 1934, the new lights in 1935, the major construction and new lights in the 1960's could all be discussed in detail but space really does not permit an extensive treatment of these projects here

In addition to the roads and the streets the other major issue that has faced Council for 100 years has been drains Drainage has been bad in Exeter because of the level land and the heavy clay soil Drains were put in on the streets to provide drainage for the cellars, but flooding of basements occurred frequently Selected items illustrate this problem

March, 1920

> Exeter had its own little flood that was serious enough for the time on Friday of last week The creek that runs through between James and Huron Streets went on a rampage for several hours Some who have been residents of town for many years say that it was the worst they have ever seen Mrs Pickard, whose property borders the creek says she remembers once when it was as bad Just at noon the creek began to swell and it rose until the lots on either side were covered by several feet of water The stable of Dr Hyndman was flooded The water was running over the road on Andrew Street almost a foot deep Cellars on either side were filled ”

September, 1927

> "Exeter experienced a miniature flood on Saturday morning when the creek which runs through the south part of the town overflowed and flooded the property east of Main Street Water was running over the roads and pedestrian traffic was almost blocked The water crossed Main Street and people had to be taken over in autos or get their feet wet The creek that runs under the Ford Garage crosses Main Street and runs along Ann Street was not able to carry the water and it began to pile up behind the buildings on the east side of Main Street "

Similar floods occurred in 1929, 1937, 1950 and 1954 In February 1954 a river ran through the heart of town 300 feet wide Gordon Koch, a teacher at the high school was marooned at noon at home on Ann Street and phoned H L Sturgis, the principal who said "charter a boat" but get to school Another major flood occurred in the downtown area when the creek again flooded in July, 1969 after a tremendous 3 hour rainfall The south part of the town lies in a small spillway and the creek which exists naturally here is now enclosed in a large tile through most of the town This creek, in addition to flooding the south part of the village from time to time contributed to other problems It was a convenient dumping place and people threw garbage, offal, manure, dead animals and all manner of filth into the creek It was a constant source of complaint for this reason as well as the flood danger

The provision of a major sewer system for the town was first seriously considered in 1947 when a preliminary survey indicated a cost of $150,000 In 1949 Reeve A J Sweitzer began a sewer system

with the construction of a major sewer on William Street. Little more was done, however, toward the system until the late 1950's. Finally in 1961 Council and the OWRC reached an agreement and in 1962 construction of a sanitary sewer system began. Much of the town is now serviced.

The provision of water and electricity are other important services.

The existence of a water works in Exeter dates from August, 1900. At that time a water works system "on a small scale was inaugurated for street watering purposes", when it was tested it "worked admirably". The system consisted of a six horse power gasoline engine which was located at the river. This engine drove the pump which forced water through the main which had been installed along Main Street. The water was forced into two tanks "about sixty feet high" at the Town Hall. The pressure was "so strong that the two large tanks could be filled in less than an hour". The engine, pump, and pipes cost $2,000. In addition to watering the Main Street, which was still unpaved the Council planned to sell water to people for lawn watering and to mill owners along the way.

There is no record of any significant additions to this system until 1909. In that year Council passed a by-law authorizing the borrowing of $22,000 for the purpose of building a water works. Council negotiated the purchase of "that part of the river bed and banks of the Aux Sable River, known as the Mill property" from James N. Howard. Howard had operated a small power plant in the old grist mill which had formerly stood on this property. The price paid was $1,700. This property is now Riverview Park. In 1910 Water Commissioners were provided for in by-law Number 8 and in 1911 Council passed a by-law setting up the procedure for the management and regulation of the Water works. There was a pumping station at the river and the water was forced to the water tower located behind the Town Hall. The purchase of the mill property had included the old dam which required considerable repair and the dam was for all intents rebuilt at this time. This storage supplied the water for the system. All of the water in the system came from the river and was not, therefore, suitable for drinking. The primary reason for installing the system was of course, to provide fire protection for the Village. Mains were constructed along Main Street and the principal streets in the core of the Village. Gradually pipes were extended to the periphery of the village, for example, in 1915, 1060 feet of four inch main was built along Huron Street from Carling Street to the railroad. The project cost $800 and was designed to give fire protection to fifteen frame houses in the area. Sometime between 1910 and 1915 a main had been built to provide the Grand Trunk Railway with water at their Exeter yard. The

Railroad paid $300 to $450 a year for this service

Residential properties were serviced by the system if the owner wished to install plumbing but as was mentioned the water was not drinkable Many houses did use the service for washing, toilets if they had one, lawn watering and so on Signs in the wash room of the Central Hotel, which was the first of Exeter s hotels to have washrooms, warned patrons not to drink the water For drinking water each property owner, business, and hotel had to rely on their own well It was not until the mid 1930's that potable water was available to the villagers from the municipal system But this development will be discussed later

Much of this early water system still exists in that some of the old cast iron mains still exist and of course the water tower in the centre of town provides a major landmark although present plans call for its removal in the near future

The provision of electricity to the village also predates the establishment of a commission In the 1890's and early decades of the 1900's the provision of electricity was considered as a tremendous economic development People did not take it for granted as we do now and all sorts of developments and ideas for the use of electricity were forthcoming The Exeter Times in its June 17, 1897 issue reported on one of these electrical ideas A sheriff in California had produced a remarkable solution "To light a six-roomed house for $1 00 a month by means of an electric mixture, which could be sold around the streets in rubber pails as a milkman delivers milk" was the idea of this man "He used four cells in each cell were two poles of carbon and zinc the results, however, are produced by the solution which, of course, is secret it will easily make his fortune" said the Times

Meanwhile in Exeter a much more prosaic electrical development had taken place James N "Cap" Howard had established a power plant of modest proportions in the old grist mill that James Pickard had operated on the south bank of the Ausable River This power plant had been established in 1890, it was a wood burning steam plant and its small generator produced enough electricity to light a few lamps along Main Street and possibly to sell to a few individuals The details of this plant of Howard's are obscure but it seems to have operated until 1897 According to Mr Richard Seldon some of the material from this old plant or mill was used to build the house immediately north of the store at the corner of Wellington and Main Streets

The next phase in electric power development in Exeter came in 1897 with the establishment of the "Exeter Electric Light and Power Company Limited" This company was incorporated in August or late July of 1897 with a capitalization of $10,000 The company's charter permitted them to install and operate an electric power plant and to sell electricity in the Village of Exeter The Exeter Times reports that the company "will purchase an entirely new plant of the latest type and will operate the most perfect system extant"

The Board of Directors of the Company included Dr C Lutz, who was elected President of the Company The other Directors were E J Spackman, merchant, B S O'Neil, Frank Wood, a local butcher, and R C C Tremaine, B A Sc from Toronto Tremaine seems to have been the driving force behind the venture and judging from his degree he must have been an engineer, he was to be the plant manager The other stockholders included D Johns, tailor, W Bawden, contractor, R S Lang, H Bishop, merchant, and R H Collins Most of the shareholders were local people and they bought up the shares of the company very quickly since the stock was sold out by September 1897 a month or so after the company's formation The company bought the Verity Plough Works building which stood at the corner of Main and Wellington Streets The plant consisted of a General Electric 16 kw alternator and a 1-20 Royal arc machine The circuit in the beginning was planned for six and one-half miles The power was from "a boiler 66 x 14 with 84" x 3½" tubes and a 110 h p Brown engine 14 x 36 This plant was installed in either late August or September after the company had been "fortunate enough in securing an excellent spring of water at the Verity building" The original plan was to generate power for 1500 incandescent lights

The company had already been given a franchise to erect poles and string wires along the streets The Council had also given the company a contract to provide lighting for the streets of the Village This contract was dated August 16, 1897 and had been accepted by Council on a motion by Messers Rollins and Snell at the meeting of August 20, 1897 So during the summer of 1897 "Exeterites" watched as two hundred poles were erected and wired This activity no doubt stimulated householders and businesses to also contract with the company One of the first houses wired was the Pickard residence on John Street It was up to the property owner to wire the house and make it ready to receive the connection from the company's circuit which was made under Tremaine's supervision The Exeter Times urged "parties who intend installing the service to do so at the earliest convenience" so they would be "wired up by the time the plant is in operation"

Electricity was lighting about 350 incandescent lights by the late fall of 1897 and "a staff of workmen were busily engaged in wiring an additional 900 lights" The service was limited, as it was in most towns with steam plants, to the following hours, in the summer light was available from 8 p m to 1 a m and in the winter from 5 a m to 8 a m and in the evening from 5 p m to 8 p m, although there is some evidence that a late service to midnight was also available The boiler was the key and it had to be kept fired, wood was used whenever it was available but it was not as plentiful as the company had hoped, railroad ties, rails from old fences and so on were used The problem is illustrated by this reference, about 1911 Mr Richard Seldon traded all the rail fencing from his farm just south of the village for wire and the company was happy to do this since wire was cheaper than coal However, coal was used when wood was not available There were many interruptions particularly during thunderstorms which, if severe enough, resulted in the closing down of the generating plant

The Company's rates are given below as they appeared in the advertising columns of the Exeter Times The Times felt that "prices were so low that everybody should use the system"

House Lighting

Main Hall - $3 10 per annum per 16 c p or 4/5¢ per night
1 parlor lamp $2 80 per annum per 16 c p or 7/10¢ per night
each subsequent parlor lamp $1 80

Dining room	$2 75 per annum per 16 c p
Kitchen	$2 75 per annum per 16 c p
Upstairs hall	$2 75 per annum per 16 c p
Spare Bedroom	$1 50 per annum per 16 c p
Ordinary Bedroom	$1 75 per annum per 16 c p
Cellar	90¢ per annum per 8 c p

Commercial Rates

1- 5 lights	$4 50 per annum per 16 c p
5-10 lights	$4 40 per annum per 16 c p
10-15 lights	$4 25 per annum per 16 c p
15-20 lights	$4 10 per annum per 16 c p
20-25 lights	$4 00 per annum per 16 c p
25 plus lights	$3 90 per annum per 16 c p

"General practise has proved it to be more satisfactory for the consumer to own everything within his own walls The foregoing low rates have been figured on this basis and in order to secure them the following nominal initial charges are made for wiring with lamp complete

open or cleat	$1 35 per light
concealed	$1 70 per light

The advertisement was signed
by R C C Tremaine, Manager

The Exeter Electric Light and Power Company had a very successful first year of operation and in the summer of 1898 declared a dividend of 5%. The 1898 Board remained the same except for the addition of John Sweitzer in place of Frank Wood. In late 1898 Tremaine and Snell bought the controlling interest in the plant and operated it until 1915 or early 1916. The Company operated on the basis of evening, and in winter, morning service only during this time. The Village bought electricity for street lights and for the Town Hall spending around $1200 a year for the service. In 1914 the Municipal Electric Bill to the Company was $1385.10. There were about 50 street lights some carbon arc lamps and some incandescent. No record exists or, at least, is known, to indicate how many private customers the company had. As far as can be determined none of the hotels purchased electric power and many stores did not. Certainly quite a few homes, especially of the prosperous members of the community had the luxury of electric light even though it was limited and of low illumination.

In 1915 the contract between the municipality was to expire and it was in late 1914 and the first half of 1915 that considerable agitation developed in Exeter and area to have the Ontario Hydro Electric Power Commission bring service to Exeter. This, of course, is what happened and Snell and Tremaine's company ceased to operate. They sold the building after the first world war to S. Cann who operated a cider mill there for some years. The building, long a landmark in Exeter with the high chimney was torn down in recent years by an agency selling a different kind of "power". The site is now occupied by a retail store of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

In any case the supply of electricity to Exeter moved into its third period of development in 1914 when the Council was in touch with Ontario Hydro. There were no developments in 1914 and in 1915 the Village Council wrote Sir Adam Beck to "lay before him the matter of hydro-electricity for the municipality". The Council was not satisfied with "the way the hydro commission was working on this matter". There was some pressure on the Council which consisted of Reeve J. Taylor of the Ross-Taylor Company, B. W. F. Beavers, Dr. Roulston, J. R. Hind and Mr. Harton, the clerk-treasurer was T. B. Carling who operated the general store in addition to being clerk. The pressure referred to derived from the fact that the Electric Company's franchise expired at the end of 1915 and Council had to either secure Ontario Hydro power or renew the Company's franchise. Certainly this represented one of the most important decisions any council had faced in some time.

Exeter was not alone in agitating for hydro. The people of the area from Dashwood and Crediton east to Kirkton and Woodham

and from Hensall south to Lucan, where Ontario Hydro was already providing service were anxious for the power lines to reach them St Mary's also had hydro and it was to St Marys that the area looked for leadership On February 4, 1915 a meeting, chaired by Dr Copeland, Mayor of St Marys, was held at Kirkton It was argued that the area between St Marys and Exeter was one of the finest agricultural areas in Ontario and therefore it was not reasonable that it should be without the service of Ontario Hydro The meeting also discussed the possibility of an electrified railroad line from St Marys, through Kirkton, to Exeter and ultimately to the lake This was the age of interest in electrified or radial railways in Southern Ontario The London and Port Stanley Railway and the Lake Erie and Northern Railway from Kitchener to Port Dover were built around this time Narcisse Cantin of St Joseph also began talking about a Stratford to St Joseph Radial Railroad shortly after World War I as well However, the Kirkton meeting heard an Ontario Hydro Engineer named Castor explain that a power line from St Marys to Exeter would "be a 13,000 volt line and carry 500 h p" It would cost $1,500 per mile, a "step down station" would have to be built just south of Exeter at a cost of $4,000 Castor explained that the radial railroad would have to be a separate project, Ontario Hydro was not in the railroad business

In February of 1915 the Council had further correspondence with Ontario Hydro indicating progress was being made The Council continued to show interest in the St Marys to Exeter Railway and agreed to participate in an Association agitating for government subsidies for the construction of such railways In March 1915 Councillors Harton, Hind and Beavers went to Toronto as part of a delegation going to see Premier Hearst seeking a provincial subsidy of $3,200 per mile for the construction of radial railroads

The Exeter Times began a campaign in the spring of 1915 to interest Exeter in Hydro In one issue it had the following item

Pertinent Hydro Questions

1 Do you want hydro?
2 Can we get it?
3 Are you working for it?
4 Will you vote for it?
5 Will you use it?
6 Will you as a citizen back the Council in going after it?
7 Would you like unsightly overhead wires in the business part of the town?
8 Do you want ornamental lights for the streets?

9. Do you want better street lights than at present?
10. Do you know what the present street lights cost?
11. Do you want 24 hour lighting service?
12. DO YOU WANT TO BOOM, EXETER?

The Times continued its campaign in June 1915 in support of the Council's pending arrangements with Ontario Hydro. Certainly council supported the idea, at least every indication is that B. W. F. Beavers was strongly in favour of it and he seemed to be a leading voice in Council. The Times asked the people again and again should we "connect up with hydro for twenty four hour service or grant another franchise to the Electric Light Company". It went on to say "as usual Exeter has moved slowly and cautiously. Other towns have jumped into the hydro belt and have not regretted it. This has brought hydro power all around us — north, east, and south ... We want hydro! We must have it ... the extension of the present franchise is the only alternative and in that case the people's hands are tied during the term of the agreement ... now is the time for hydro, get out and boost it".

Under the heading HYDRO IS A GOOD THING the Times printed the following:

H — stands for hydro. The power for all classes
Y — stands for yourself the voice of the masses
D — stands for the die that has now been cast
R — for the Reasons Why the BYLAW should PASS
O — for the OVATION when it's CARRIED AT LAST.

The Times' campaign was being directed at an apathetic, or at best, a moderately interested populace. The Council also tried to instill some interest among the people in Hydro by meetings, one such meeting was held in July of 1915 at which there was only "fair attendance". Council had asked Dr. Copeland of St. Marys to speak and he extolled the merits of Hydro. George Stanley of Lucan had also been asked to speak and he discussed the value of hydro to a community in stimulating commercial activity; he added that "Lucan would laugh in their boots" if Exeter defeated the proposed by-law. Castor of Ontario Hydro explained the values of hydro and its low cost stating that "washings can be done for 15¢ a month".

The by-law that Council was bringing before the people for their opinion was By-Law number 14, 1915. The purpose of the by-law was to provide for a $20,000 debenture issue to cover the cost of the necessary plant to distribute electric power. The electric power was to be supplied from Niagara under an agreement between the Village of Exeter and the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario All the evidence indicates that the electorate approached the vote quietly, indicating, perhaps, to both the Council and the Press that there was little interest But when the vote was held on the by-law on July 22, 1915, 70% of the eligible voters went to the polls and there were only seven dissenting votes in the unusually "quiet election" Council passed the By-Law in August and immediately signed the agreement with Ontario Hydro The agreement called for the village to erect new poles, new conductors and new transformers The cost of power supplied to the town was to be $43 70 per horse power This price was based on the village using 200 hp or at least seventy-five percent or 150 h p However, the village was allowed five years to reach the agreed horsepower during which time it would pay for only what it used

The Times was elated "Hydro may not be perfection but it is the nearest to it we can get" Hydro will "make this progressive little town another link in the chain of places having white light from Niagara"

Once the agreement was signed erection of Exeter's new poles and wiring began in the fall Street lighting was discussed and it was decided that 176 street lights would be put up, this would cost $2,640 per year for the hydro power This compared with the 55 street lights in use in 1915, of which 36 were the carbon arc type and 19 incandescent in 1915 the village had paid the Electric Company $1,550 for power for these lights There was some interest in ornamental standards with underground cable in the business section from Anne Street to Sanders Street In November 1915 Dr J W Browning, J G Jones and thirty other merchants petitioned Council to put this type of street light and standard up in the business section Council, on a motion by Hind and Harton refused to grant the petitioners wishes As a result overhead wiring, wooden poles, with somewhat ornamental fixtures went up on Main Street Some of these old ornamental iron fixtures can still be seen on some of the back streets of the town

Sometime in 1916 the Ontario Hydro high voltage lines reached Exeter from St Marys The "step-down station" was built and hydro came to Exeter Stores, hotels, houses and so on were wired for hydro if they had not already been customers of the electric company "King" Davis and other electricians had a busy time The number of customers climbed until by 1920 it is reported that there were between 300 and 400 customers in the village There are, however, no extant records to verify this

With hydro in Exeter, Council under advisement from the Ontario Hydro Commission undertook to set up a public utilities commission Until this was set up the Fire, Water and Light Committee of Council was the responsible body, this meant, of course, that

Council dealt directly with Ontario Hydro So, in 1917 the Exeter Public Utilities Commission was established and Council turned over responsibility for both water and electricity to the commission On January 1st, 1917 two by-laws were "presented to the Electors" of the Village of Exeter for their approval By-law number 8, 1916 was a by-law which provided for the establishment of a commission to assume responsibility for administering water and electric power services in Exeter This responsibility had previously been part of the Village Council's duties The by-law was approved by the voters 140 to 7 By-law number 9, 1916 was a by-law to provide for the construction of the works necessary to give full twenty-four hour a day service to the village This was approved by the voters 129 to 9

Consequently, Council following the wishes of the electors gave third reading to these two by-laws and delegated to a commission the responsibilities of providing the services of water and electricity The first commissioners were in office as of January 1, 1917, they were in office by acclamation, a practice that was to become customary for the Commission since in the over fifty years of its existence the number of elections has been very small, perhaps two or three The first commissioners were H E Huston, an insurance agent by profession and S M (Sam) Sanders one of the founders of the Exeter Canning and Preserving Company B W F Beavers, by virtue of his office as Reeve was the third member of the Commission Mr Beavers was a merchant operating a dry goods store about where Lindenfield's Hardware is today, later he acquired the Spackman business near the corner of John and Main Streets Huston's term was for one year and Sanders for two years as provided in the by-law Reeve Beavers had the two men draw lots to determine the length of the terms Huston was elected as Chairman In April of 1917 Mr Sanders resigned and John R Hind, manager of the Ross-Taylor Company lumber yard which was located where The Beaver Lumber Company's yard is now was appointed to take Sanders place Hind served on the Commission for eleven years

The men that Council periodically engaged to run the small waterworks were henceforth engaged by the Commission Herman W Doerr, an electrician, had sometime before 1917 been engaged by Council and in 1917 he became the manager of the waterworks and hydro service for the commission, his salary at this time was $70 00 per month

When the Commission assumed administrative responsibility the village was almost half-way toward its 200 h p agreement In February, 1917 the billing by Ontario Hydro was for 80 4 h p and the Commission paid $279 12 for the month, as now, billings were based on peak load which occurred at 8 15 p m at this particular time

The early years of the Commission did not see any great expansion of the waterworks system. The primary job in this department was maintenance of the existing system and minor periodic extensions. But Exeter did not expand much at this time so little additional main was necessary. In the hydro department the commission's crew which varied in size and in members constructed the lines and so on to the various parts of the town. Hydro power was delivered, for example, to the canning factory and to the other peripheral areas of the village. Not only did the Commission administer Exeter but also undertook in its first couple of years to administer the hydro facilities in Dashwood, Zurich and in 1923 the immediate rural area. This rural system had 130 customers. Once a month H. W. Doerr and, when he was hired in 1921, R. E. Russell would go to Dashwood and Zurich to read meters, render accounts, do the bookkeeping and make installations. The police village of Dashwood agreed to pay the Commission $150 per year for this supervisory service plus the costs of any installations made by the commission. The amount Zurich paid was probably somewhat higher. Mr. Doerr received an extra $8.00 per month in addition to his salary of $940 per year which he received as the Commission's Superintendent and Secretary. The Exeter Public Utilities Commission provided this service to these other communities for some years until the rural hydro division of Ontario Hydro was established in this area.

In these early years of hydro in Ontario there seemed to be a close affinity between local commissions and the Ontario Commission. One illustration of this relationship is exhibited by the following letter dated October 19, 1921 and addressed to Sir Adam Beck from the local commission:

> Dear Sir:
>
> It is with mingled feelings of sorrow and regret that we have learned of the sad bereavement you have suffered in the loss of your esteemed and much loved partner the late Lady Beck.
>
> If words could express our feelings, we could in a measure tell you of our deepest sympathy for you at this time, but words fail.
>
> We wish to extend to you our deepest expressions of sympathy and trust that you may receive strength from our Maker to bear you through this, your greatest loss.
>
> signed **John Hind**
> Chairman

The Commission met in the Library in its early years since it did not have any building under its jurisdiction. Electric and water accounts could be paid at the office of T. G. Creech the express agent. Mr. Creech received some small remuneration for this ser-

vice. A few years later the building previously used as a harness shop by P. Frayne and M. Quance on Main Street served as the Commission's office and shop. The Waterworks and Hydro department payroll in the 1920's and early 1930's included from time to time various part time or casual labourers as well as the small permanent staff. Such names as R. E. Russell and W. Lutman were among those employed. Lutman was the only employee in the history of the Commission to die on the job by electrocution. He was killed in 1931. E. "King" Davis, A. Kernick, B. Cunningham, John Norry, Thomas Welsh, James Parsons, Leo Hennessey, Harry Lewis, Elmer Reeder, Archie Ireland, Dewey Ward, Ed Sims, C. B. Carruthers and many others were also employed over the years. Rosa Dearing who was office clerk was the only female employee prior to the mid 1930's.

As has been mentioned from 1917 to 1934 the Commission did not undertake any major waterworks construction but in the 1930's it was becoming apparent that something had to be undertaken by way of a potable water supply. In 1934 the Chamber of Commerce petitioned the Village Council to undertake an examination of the feasibility of installing a potable, domestic water system. Evidently men like L. J. Penhale, manager of the canning factory, was very interested in a water supply. Albert Traquair, and other prominent citizens were strongly urging provision of a domestic water supply. Many people, however, had no interest in the scheme, since they had good wells. In March 1934 "an informal meeting of a number of representative ratepayers was held in the Exeter Library ... and the following resolution was adopted on a motion by B. W. F. Beavers and B. M. Francis:

> "that this meeting request the Municipal Council to take the necessary steps to secure available information as to the cost of installing a suitable system of drinking water for the Village of Exeter"

The Council referred this to the Commission. This Commission engaged the services of D. H. Fleming a Toronto consultant. The Council agreed to hold a vote on the debenture by-law for the waterworks extension and improvement. This vote went 246 for and 96 against. The situation regarding water in Exeter at this time was one of increasing seriousness. Individual wells upon which people depended for their drinking water were becoming polluted from weeping tile. In several homes it was necessary to boil well water before using it. The river water which was in the village water system was not fit to drink.

Test drilling commenced in June 1934. Considerable interest was shown in a well on the property of W. F. Abbott. A test well was dug at this site on Marlborough Street and this well provided

potable water. It did not however, become a producing well, for several years.

In 1936 land and springs on the farm of Mr. Garnet Frayne were obtained and rights of way for a 6 inch pipe line to the old pump house at the river also were obtained through the properties involved which were owned by Messers Frayne, Yellow and Dow. A reservoir was built near the old pumphouse with a capacity of 250,000 IG to receive the water from the springs where a motor and pump were installed to pump the water to the reservoir. The interior of the old water tower which was erected in 1909 was also cleaned and painted. In 1937 the old pumphouse at the river was sold and removed and the present pumphouse constructed. By 1939 a large part of the village was receiving a supply of drinking water from the Abbott well, which evidently turned out to be on the road allowance rather than on his property as was originally thought and from the springs on the Frayne farm.

In March 1937 the Commission set rates as follows.

Private Dwellings one or more taps	$ 6.00
with bath	3.00
with toilet	3.00
Public Garages washing cars	25.00
not washing cars	12.00
Bakeshops	9.00
Dentist office	9.00
Doctor's office	9.00
Barber shop	9.00
Theatres with toilets	15.00
Butcher shop	9.00
Stores	9.00
Creamery	75.00
School	100.00
Huron Lumber Co	25.00
Flax Mill	20.00
Chopping Mill	25.00
V. Cann	200.00
Green House	20.00
Hotel	60.00
Bowling Green	35.00
Arena	50.00
CNR	250.00
Canadian Canners	350.00
Hydrant	40.00
Tank of Water (Cash)	1.00

The total cost of this improvement and construction was $35,000.

Another major commission undertaking in the 1930's was the erection on Main Street of cast iron "ornamental street light standards" with underground wiring. These replaced the lights that had served Main Street for the previous twenty years. These lights continued in use until 1966 when the present concrete poles with the fluorescent lights replaced them.

By 1940 the waterworks consisted of the domestic system and the river supply. There were two sources of domestic water being tapped, that is, the Abbott Well on Marlborough Street and the springs on the Frayne farm. This water was collected at the reservoir near the dam and pumped to the system. The river supply was used only by the Canadian Canners for cooling purposes at this time. In 1939 the Commission was serving 308 domestic customers, 66 commercial customers and 5 industrial customers for water. By 1946 these figures were 531, 85 and 4 respectively. Ten years later in 1956 there were 890 domestic customers, 135 commercial and 8 industrial. The present figures are approximately 1,100, 140 and 15.

During the war years almost no water main extension or improvement to the waterworks was undertaken. The period 1945 to 1950, however, saw several important developments. During this time a third well, namely, the Kestle Well just south of town was brought in to production in 1945. This well was never used very extensively since poor tests were obtained and its use was discontinued within a few years. In 1949 a major addition to the water system was completed. In that year the Moodie Well began to contribute water to the village supply. The cost of the 50 foot well, the three miles of six inch main from the well to the Village system and other works cost $48,000.

In 1960 the Commission added a fourth well when it sank the Hicks Well primarily as a stand-by or as an extra supply of water for dry periods. The table below summarizes the domestic sources of water that the Commission has.

WELL	GALLONAGE	DISTANCE
Frayne Springs	75 million	1 mile of 6" main
Marlborough Street Well	2.6 million	
Moodie Well	37.5 million	3 miles of 6" main
Hicks Well	8 million	1¾ miles of 6" main

The Frayne Springs source is the only water in the system that is treated in any way and chlorination of this supply began in 1966.

The major waterworks job undertaken by the Commission during the post war period was, of course, the sharing and participation in the Morrison Dam project. For some years prior to 1958 when the dam was completed there had been considerable concern over the shortage of water in Exeter. In 1954 the Canadian Canners, Council, and the Commission discussed the water supply problem. The Canning Factory had for years drawn water from the local dam; this had been done using a pump and engine which were set up at the dam. The water was carried to the factory in an above ground pipe. All of this equipment including the pipe were there only during the canning season. In 1955 the Commission built an 8 inch cast iron main from the local dam to the Canadian Canners plant. The pump, engine and small chlorinator were set up temporarily at the dam. 1955 was the first year that the Commission sold river water to the Canadian Canners. Before that the Canning factory had apparently operated the system. In 1955 the Commission sold 4 million Imperial Gallons of river water to the Canning factory.

But, as indicated the Canadian Canners considered that the potential supply in the local dam was inadequate and felt the town and the commission should do something to relieve this shortage. There was considerable discussion in 1954 and 1955 that the town and the Canadian Canners had some kind of agreement that if a guaranteed water supply were forthcoming the Company would undertake expansion of the Exeter plant. However, in 1955 Mayor R. E. Pooley said that "the town never had a written agreement with the company, it was a verbal understanding that if the Town secured an adequate water supply a sizeable addition would be erected" at the local plant. The mayor went on to say that a company official had assured the town that the company would still expand the factory if the supply of water from the proposed dam materialized. At the same meeting Reeve MacKenzie said that the purchase of Canadian Canners by the California Packing Company "makes our obligation to supply water even larger than before".

The Morrison Dam project was quite a controversial issue at the time. The Ausable Authority under whose jurisdiction the dam would be built was enthusiastic about the idea since a dam somewhere in this area had been recommended in the 1949 Authority report. Andrew Dixon, John Morrison and other members of the Authority urged its construction since it would provide a reservoir to store water for the low flow period and help control spring run off, it would also provide a recreational area of some merit. The Council and the Commission supported the dam's construction for other reasons, both bodies wished to secure the water supply that would be available for the Canning factory since it represented Exeter's principal industrial activity.

Not everyone, however, supported the project, in fact, a majority of the people of Exeter probably opposed the dam. In order to avoid delays the Council requested that the Municipal Board hold a hearing to determine whether or not a vote should be held on the proposal. At the hearing representatives of the Authority, the Council, and the Commission spoke. Authority Chairman J. A. Morrison urged its construction for conservation purposes, C. V. Pickard, Town Clerk said "the town gets five or six inquiries a year from industries wishing to locate but several have been turned away because of the shortage of water in town." He felt Exeter should do everything possible to secure more industrial and commercial activity to balance the disproportionately large residential assessment that the town had. W. G. Cochrane expressed his feeling that the dam represented Exeter's only answer to the water shortage problem. K. J. Lampman the Commission's manager pointed out that the Commission realized it would probably have to build a chlorinating and filtering plant. The Municipal Board ruled shortly after that no vote was required and the Council, Commission and the Authority which was the actual agency responsible for undertaking the work proceeded with the plans. The details, problems, price changes, tendering problems and so on occupied considerable time and cannot be gone into here. It is enough for our purposes to say that finally in 1957 the contract was awarded to the Pearce Construction Company of Hagersville who had submitted the lowest tender of $168,000, there were three other bids, considerably higher. The dam itself was finished in 1958 and named the John A. Morrison Dam in honour of the Authority Chairman. The dam provided a storage capacity of fifty million gallons and when the stop logs were added an additional fifteen million gallons could be stored. This sixty-five million gallons plus the local dam's five million gallons gives the Commission a source of some seventy million gallons to provide to the canning factory. With this source the factory's consumption increased from 2.5 million gallons in 1957 to 15 million gallons in 1960. In the years 1961 to 1972 the consumption has varied from 30 million gallons to 59 million gallons per year.

The cost of the dam was divided as follows:

1.	Usborne Township	$18,000
2.	Various government grants	90,600
3.	General municipal levy	9,060
4.	Public Utilities Commission	81,540

This represented the largest single expenditure in the Commission's history. So after years of debate the dam was a reality. The objectors must admit now that a fine winter and summer outdoor recreation area has been provided and the Commission has increased its supply of water for non-domestic purposes. In 1961 the Commission constructed a chlorinating and filtration plant at the river to handle up to 600 gallons per minute of river water. This represented another major expenditure in theCommission's efforts to supply the Canadian Canners with the water they required. It should also be remembered that the factory also is supplied with large gallonages of domestic water as well.

Other water works department undertakings in the recent years included main replacements, and major extensions. Among these major extensions was an eight inch main to the north end of the town. This was done in 1964 following a fire in that part of town. It is interesting to note that the Fire Underwriters Association had repeatedly criticized the Commission in the 1920's and 1930's for the very inadequate fire protection in the north part of the town.

At the present time, then, the Commission operates a water works department which, through nearly fifteen miles of main, supplies annually to all types of consumers up to 180 million gallons of water. This includes some 40 million gallons on the average from the river supply.

In the hydro department the Commission was able to do very little during the war years. In 1940 the number of hydro customers would have been about 400. The rates paid in 1940 included those given below.

domestic - 3¢ per kwh for the first 60 hours and 9¢ per kwh for over 60 hours. The minimum bill was about 83¢.

Flat rate water heaters were 44¢ per 100 watts per month. The Ontario Hydro rates to the commission in 1940 were $34.50 per horse power per year. It will be remembered that this was about $10.00 lower than when Ontario Hydro first began supplying electricity in 1916.

Even after the war very little hydro work was done by the Commission aside from a few new services and some line replacement. The largest number of services installed would have been in 1947 when the war time housing area was serviced. This minimal amount of work in the hydro department was characteristic actually until 1958. It should be remembered, however, that the Commission did not have a staff until 1958. The only employees the Commission had were two office staff and Mr. K. J. Lampman who was the Ontario Hydro divisional manager, he doubled as Commission manager until 1958. Mr. Leo Hennessey an Ontario Hydro employee as well, who was on what amounted to permanent loan to the Commission. This lack of staff was an important reason why the Commission did not undertake any extensive hydro works at this time.

In 1958 a major step was taken by the Commission. The present manager Mr. Hugh Davis was hired and a staff of linemen and ground men were engaged. Mr. M. Keating was taken on as foreman in 1958 as well. Thus the bulk of the work done in the hydro department during the last thirty years has been done since 1958. This work includes a very large amount of line and pole

replacement, the Commission now has $200,000 invested in this part of its plant. Transformers were added, the water heater control unit costing $13,000 was installed in an effort to control peak load. The office procedure was modernized and generally speaking under Mr. Davis' management the Commission has moved to modernize its operations.

In street lighting, too, considerable progress has been made since 1958. In 1958 there were 247 street lights in Exeter with a load of about 33 kilowatts, the investment was something over $5,000. There are now about 350 street lights with a kilowattage of about 59 and the street light plant is valued at $25,000, this figure, it should be noted, does not include the new fluorescent street lights on Main Street which were installed by the Commission at the request of the Council in 1966. These replaced the ornamental standards that had been installed in 1935. It is interesting to recall that in 1915 the village of Exeter had paid the Electric Light Company some $1,550. for lighting 55 street lights of very low illumination. In 1965 the Town paid the Commission $6,500. for lighting 330 lights of much greater illumination.

At present consumers in Exeter average a consumption of about 625 kilowatt hours per month. This is very high when compared to similar communities indicating presumably that the average Exeter household uses many appliances. For its electricity the consumer in Exeter pays about $6.75 per 500 kwh per month. There are some 1300 consumers of electricity now being served by the Commission. Perhaps it should be noted that the Commission is faced with buying its hydro from the H.E.P.C. at a rate much higher than other nearby towns. Exeter's Commission in 1967 paid $44.62 per kw per year. Seaforth paid $36.92 and Clinton $42.77. The figures are proportionately still the same.

In addition to modernization of the hydro plant the Commission also modernized its equipment and storage facilities since 1958. New vehicles were purchased and a new warehouse was erected behind the Commission's building on Main Street. This building occupied by the Commission on Main Street was, incidentally, acquired by the Commission on July 31, 1943 when it was purchased from the Bank of Montreal. It will be recalled that before being occupied by the Bank of Montreal it had been Molson's Bank.

Recent work by the Commission has included reconstruction of the power line along Main Street. The first stage of this was done in 1967 and stage two was undertaken shortly thereafter from the river to the north limits of the Town. This work removed the unsightly lines from the street since the line was built along the rear lot lines of the properties along Main Street. Concrete standards and fluorescent lights like those in the business section were extended

along the whole of Main Street.

Obviously, then, the present and future commissions have much important work to do. It is to be hoped that Exeter will continue to have men of integrity with a devotion to public service acting as members of the Commission that provides the Town with the basic services of water and electricity.

The Members of the
Exeter Public Utilities Commission

1917

H E Hnston - chairman
S M Sanders
B W F Beavers - Reeve
J.R Hind replaced Mr Sanders in April 1917

1924

J R Hind - chairman
H E Huston
W D Sanders - Reeve

1928

J R Hind - chairman
William Ward
C B Snell - Reeve

1929

William Ward - chairman
P Coates
C B Snell - Reeve

1930

Wm Ward - chairman
P Coates
B M Francis - Reeve

1934

P Coates - chairman
Wm Ward
W D Sanders - Reeve

1935

L.J Penhale - chairman
Wm Ward
Thos Pryde - Reeve

1937

L J Penhale - chairman
Wm Ward
W D Sanders - Reeve

1940

L J Penhale - chairman
Thos Pryde
B W Tnckey - Reeve

1945

L J Penhale
H C Rivers
B W Tnckey - Reeve

1949

H C Rivers chairman
L J Penhale - chairman
A J Sweitzer - Reeve

1951

L.J Penhale - chairman
H C Rivers
B W Tuckey - Mayor

1952

L J Penhale - chairman
H C Rivers
Wm Cochrane - Mayor

1955

L J Penhale - chairman
H C Rivers
R E Pooley - Mayor

1956

L J Penhale - chairman
H C Rivers
R E Pooley - Mayor
Wm Cochrane - replaced Mr Rivers in May 1956

1957

L J Penhale - chairman
Wm Cochrane
R E Pooley - Mayor

1961

Wm Cochrane - chairman
L J Penhale
R E Pooley - Mayor

1962

Wm Cochrane - chairman
R E Pooley
E. Simmons - Mayor

1963

R E Pooley - chairman
M Greene
E Simmons - Mayor

1965

R E Pooley - chairman
M Greene
J H W Delbridge - Mayor

1967

R E Pooley - chairman
M Greene
J H W Delbridge - Mayor

Secretaries and Treasurers
of the
Exeter Public Utilities Commission

S M Sanders
J Senior
H W Doerr

Rosa Dearing
K J Lampman
Dorothy Davis

Managers
of the
Exeter Public Utilities Commission

H W Doerr - 1917-1934
Leo Hennessey - 1934

K J Lampman - 1935-1958
Hugh Davis - 1958-

Exeter was incorporated as a village in 1873 In 1857 the village had, perhaps 300 people, by 1861 there may have been 500 and by 1873 the population was approaching 1000 By the early 1890's the population was almost 2000 and this marked the highest population the village attained until after World War Two In 1947 the population was 1980 and in 1949, 2364 In 1921 there were only 1442 people, a drop of nearly 600 in 30 years In 1961 the population reached 3000 and it has continued to grow but quite slowly

Statistics for the years are available but they serve little purpose in this type of book As an illustration the vital statistics for 1878 are given below

Births - 64
Marriages - 16
Deaths - 28
Consumption - 4
Convulsions - 2
Heart - 2
Apoplexy - 1
Gangrene of the lungs - 1
Inflammation of the lungs - 2
Inflammation of the bowels - 1
Purpura Hemoragicea - 1

Brain fever - 1
Cancer - stomach - 1
Jaundice - 1
Sunstroke - 1
Cyanosis - 1
Inanition - 2
Summer complaint - 2
Typhoid - 2
Bronchitis - 2
Unknown - 1

By way of comparison in 1971 there were 153 births, 60 deaths and 64 marriages.

In 1878 the average age of the village population was 28. The oldest person was 76.

In 1950 with a population of 2609 the village of Exeter applied to the Ontario Municipal Board to change its status from a village to a town. The change was official on New Years Day, 1951.

There are many other aspects of municipal history that could be mentioned. The construction of about 50 wartime housing units in 1947 and 1948 caused some stir in the municipality. S. M. Sanders charged the Council with "tyranny" because no vote was held to approve the $16,000 debenture that was involved. The changing tax rate would make an interesting study, the establishment of a Planning Board, the expansion of the town eastwards with new subdivisions is another feature of the town's changing geography. These are other aspects of municipal history that cannot be examined here.

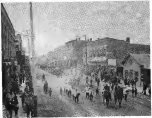
As we noted at the beginning Ontario's communities have fortunately had persons who have been willing to serve their municipality as councillors and members of various boards and commissions. There were times in Exeter when the numbers who were willing to serve on Council were few but eventually someone always came forward who was willing to do the job of governing the corporation.

William H. Verity, the Plow King, and Family

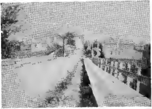
The first building is the Molson's Bank. The second is Drew's Undertaking establishment. This picture dates from the 1880's. Dinney Furniture occupies both buildings now.

Stewart's "Big Bankrupt Store"

The Presbyterian Church about 1885



Squire Leathorne Leading a Parade in the 1880's



Looking south along Main Street
Note the board walk and the old bridge

Clarence "Derry" Boyle

Nicholas Dyer-Hurdon manager of Molson's Bank and community leader in the late 1800's and early 1900's

First Hockey Provincial Champions — Exeter Jr. Hawks — 1971-72

chapter 10

Politics in Exeter

"They were all Conservatives and had been for years and years."

(Leacock's Sunshine Sketches)

"Everybody in Mariposa was either Liberal or Conservative", but in Exeter they were mostly Conservative. Indeed, they were mostly Conservative! Exeter is one of those consistent communities when it comes to politics, in every single Dominion election since Confederation, Exeter has voted for the Conservative candidate. In every provincial election except two, Exeter has voted Conservative. The two exceptions were the years 1926 and 1929 when a majority of voters in Exeter cast their ballots for W. G. Medd, the Progressive candidate. Mr. Medd was a popular Exeter businessman and this more than his politics caused the departure from tradition. Exeter, then, has an almost one hundred percent perfect record, as Emerson remarked, "consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds"; politically Exeter obviously must have many great political minds.

Before Confederation Exeter formed part of the adjacent townships and the townships in turn formed part of the District of Huron. The first parliamentary election affecting Huron was in

1835, in that election, Captain Robert Graham Dunlop, a Tory defeated the Reform candidate Colonel Anthony Van Egmond. Willis and McConnell would have been the only people living in what is now Exeter and few more joined them for some time. After the 1841 Act of Union created the Province of Canada, the new District of Huron was formed on October 14, 1841. The Huron District included the present Counties of Huron, Perth, and Bruce and the townships of Biddulph and McGillivray. Goderich was the District seat.

The Rebellion of 1837 had little direct effect on the Exeter area since there were so few people here anyway. Generally speaking, Huron was Tory and thus against the rebels. The only reference to the Exeter area notes that a Capt. Longworth of the Canada Company went to London. He sent back word to a Dr. Hamilton in Goderich to bring twelve men to London for guard duty. The twelve men set out and "where Exeter now is, the twelve men and the Doctor halted and spent the night clustered around a fire, listening to the wolves howling in their host's yards". Louis Holman, Richard Handford and others joined Capt. Longworth and twenty other men and left to fight the rebels.

In the election of 1841, Dr. William 'Tiger' Dunlop, a brother of the Captain, eventually won the seat. He had to petition the government, however, to win, since his opponent James Magill Strahan, the Reform candidate had won the election. Dunlop's charges of irregularity convinced the three lawyers sent from Toronto as the election court and he took his seat as the District's first representative in the legislature at Kingston on June 13, 1842. The hearings were held in Rattenbury's Hotel and took 14 days. As it became apparent that Dunlop would win "the Tiger's red whiskers grew redder for joy". Evidently the people in the Usborne area had voted for Dunlop beginning the Exeter area's Tory traditions. The Huron District elected Tory William Cayley in 1844 and 1853. In 1851 Reformer Malcolm Cameron defeated Cayley. In 1857 John Holmes, a Reform candidate won over Cayley. In 1861 James Dickson defeated Cayley and Dickson represented the District until Confederation.

Since Confederation, Exeter has been located in four different federal ridings. From 1867 to 1882 Exeter was in the Huron South riding, from 1882 to 1904 the Village, along with neighbouring Stephen Township formed part of the Middlesex North riding. After this Exeter was again part of Huron South until 1940. In 1940 the Huron-Perth riding was created and Exeter formed part of this riding until 1953. In that year the present Huron constituency was formed. In all of these constituencies, regardless of who the candidates were, Exeter voted solidly Conservative. Through wars,

rebellions, depressions and prosperity Exeter stood firm.

Throughout "Upper Canada" politics played a major part in giving the rural and small town areas a periodic sense of excitement. Politics has been regarded somewhat ambivalently by us "Upper Canadians". On the one hand it was taken very seriously as witnessed by the degree of corruption, bribery and shady election practices which would appall us today. The serious view of politics may also be noted in the fact that we prayed, and indeed, still do for our political leaders. The Book of Common Prayer has many prayers "for those placed in authority over us", we ask for guidance and direction "to elect fit persons to serve" in political office. There is a story, probably apocryphal, about a Methodist prayer meeting in Exeter in 1870 or 1871 during the Riel trouble in Manitoba. The prayer leader referred to these troubles saying "Oh Lord, if the government is to blame, remove it". At this, an old Grit called out, "there is no if about it, Lord, Thou knowest well enough it is to blame". With this utterance all of the Tories present groaned and the Grits all said Amen!

But at the same time that serious concern was given to the men who were to be elected and close attention paid to legislation, Upper Canadians also viewed politics and elections as occasions for fun and amusement. People in the rural areas and small towns had an opportunity, in the early days at least, to see famous politicians, including Prime Ministers and the great political orators. These face-to-face meetings, discussions, and personal confrontations gave the voters a feeling of close involvement and participation. Today news and politics has been "cut down into a commodity by the mass media, a staccato piece of show business". In the past, certainly in the small towns of Ontario the local member was widely known and many people had personally seen and quite possibly talked with the Prime Minister. Exeter's citizens, for example, had a fairly extended visit from Alexander Mackenzie, Canada's second Prime Minister, Mackenzie stayed in the Gidley home during his visit in Exeter. (This house, incidentally is now the Douglas Gould residence on William Street.) Sir Charles Tupper, who was Prime Minister for a brief period in 1896 stopped in Exeter for half a day. Mackenzie King visited here several times, Sir Wilfred Laurier, R. B. Bennett, Louis St. Laurent, Lester Pearson, John Diefenbaker all visited in Exeter for brief periods. All of them, were not, however, Prime Ministers at the time of their visits, Mackenzie King, for example, was Minister of Labor, Leader of the Opposition, and Prime Minister when he visited Exeter, during his visits he stayed with Major Heaman and later in the same house when it was owned by Albert Traquair. (This house is now owned by Kenneth Johns.) These comments are made merely to illustrate the personal nature of small town Ontario's politics

The following section of Exeter's history, then, provides some details of Exeter's political history as related to the Dominion or federal politics. The chart below shows the various candidates and provides other information in summary form

Election year	Riding in which Exeter located	Candidates	Winning Candidates	Party forming Government	Exeter's member in opposition or on Government side
1867	Huron South	M C Cameron(L) J Ritchie(C) Sills(?)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1872	Huron South	M C Cameron(L) T Greenway(C)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1874	Huron South	M C Cameron(L) T Greenway(C)	Cameron	Liberal	Government
1875	Huron South	T Greenway(?)	Greenway	Liberal	Independent
1878	Huron South	M C Cameron(L) R Porter(C)	Cameron	Conservative	Opposition
1882	North Middlesex	T Coughlin(C) L E Shiplay(L)	Coughlin	Conservative	Government
1887	North Middlesex	T Coughlin(C) L.E Shipley(L)	Coughlin	Conservative	Government
1891	North Middlesex	Hutchins(C) Taylor(L)	Hutchins	Conservative	Government
1896	North Middlesex	Hutchins (C) V Ratz(L)	Hutchins	Liberal	Opposition
1900	North Middlesex	J Sherritt(C) V Ratz(L)	Sherritt	Liberal	Opposition
1904	Huron South	B B Gunn(C) T Fraser(L)	Gunn	Liberal	Opposition
1908	Huron South (by election)	M Y McLean(L) H Horton(C)	McLean	Liberal	Government
1908	Huron South	M Y McLean(L) J Sherritt(C)	McLean	Liberal	Government
1911	Huron South	M Y McLean(L) J J Merner(C)	Merner	Conservative	Government
1917	Huron South	J J Merner(C) T McMillan(L)	Merner	Conservative (war coalition)	Government
1921	Huron South	Black(P) T McMillan(L) J J Merner(C)	Black	Liberal	Opposition
1925	Huron South	T McMillan(L) R McMillan(P) J J Merner(C)	McMillan	Liberal	Government
1926	Huron South	T McMillan(L) A Hicks(C)	McMillan	Liberal	Government
1930	Huron South	T McMillan(L) N Trewartha(C)	McMillan	Conservative	Opposition
1932	Huron South (by election)	W Golding(L) L Rader(C)	Golding	Conservative	Opposition

1935	Huron Perth	Donnelly(C) W Golding(L) R McMillan	Golding	Liberal	Government
1940	Huron Perth	W Golding(L) J Morley(C)	Golding	Liberal	Government
1945	Huron Perth	W Golding(L) T Pryde(C) G Cann(CCF)	Golding	Liberal	Government
1949	Huron Perth	A Y McLean(L) E.McKinley(C) J R Peters(CCF)	McLean	Liberal	Government
1953	Huron	A Y McLean(L) E Cardiff(C)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1957	Huron	A Y McLean(L) E Cardiff(C)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1958	Huron	E Cardiff(C) W.Cochrane(L)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1962	Huron	E Cardiff(C) E.Fisher(L) C Hemingway(CCF) E Douglas(SC)	Cardiff	Conservative	Government
1963	Huron	E Cardiff(C) G McGavin(L)	Cardiff	Liberal	Opposition
1965	Huron	R E McKinley(C) M Edgar(L)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition
1968	Huron	R E.McKinley(C) M Edgar(L)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition
1972	Huron	R E McKinley(C) C Thomas(L) S Weary(NDP) E Rain(I)	McKinley	Liberal	Opposition

As can be seen from the table the politics of South Huron were dominated during the period from Confederation to the 1880's by a gentleman who liked to style himself as "Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq. Q.C." Cameron was a Reformer, i e , a Liberal and Exeter was represented by him in Ottawa from 1867 to 1882 except for the period 1875-1878 when Thomas Greenway represented the area

In 1867 Cameron defeated the Conservative candidate Ritchie Sir John A MacDonald's government gerrymandered Huron in 1871 hoping to secure Conservative victories in at least two of the three ridings created in Huron The gerrymander drew heavy criticism in the House with Mr Rymal of Wentworth using most picturesque language as he attacked the government The gerrymander did not bother Cameron since he won again in the 1872 election and again in 1874 The Tories lost the 1874 "Pacific Scandal" election and Exeter was represented for the first time on the government side of the House There was to be trouble, however, over the 1874 election, local Tories protested Cameron's victory

This period, i e the 1870's was one of confusing and sometimes violent political activity in South Huron Because of the confusion the period is one of the most interesting in the history of federal politics in South Huron, consequently, it will be dealt with more fully than some of the other periods.

Alexander Mackenzie, then Prime Minister, called an election in 1874. The South Huron Tories moved to make plans. Exeter men such as Benjamin Valeck Elliott and Isaac Carling were important figures in the local Conservative organization. These men with their fellow Tories met in Dixon's Hotel in Brucefield on the 9th of January, 1874 to discuss the coming election. Elliott and Carling were very critical of Mackenzie for calling the election and putting the country to such "unnecessary expense". Nevertheless, they were hopeful of a Conservative victory in South Huron. The general feeling was that Cameron could be beaten, "it was a well-known fact that Mr. Cameron had lost a good deal of his influence" because of his "debauchery of the people" at the previous election. The 'Times' of Exeter said that Cameron had been elected in 1872 "by the grossest acts of corruption and by the most outrageous violation of law and the constitution". The good editor of the 'Times' went on to speak so strongly as to suggest that Cameron had "polluted and dragged through the very depths of corruption" the South Huron constituency. He used means "at once most foul and disreputable". These comments from the 'Times' represented the feeling of the Exeter and South Huron Tories and with much hope they nominated Thomas Greenway to contest the election against Cameron. A short time after the Brucefield meeting the Conservative planners met in Exeter's old Union Hotel to organize the campaign. The 'Times' remarked that the political morality of the Government was so low that only the return of Sir John would solve the country's ills. The Reform Party was "impure and corrupt".

The strong Conservative campaign failed to unseat the seemingly unbeatable Cameron. The 'Times' moaned "O wretched hour that finds me thus", not only had South Huron elected a Liberal but the country had returned Mackenzie's Liberal government. But, harkened the Times "take heart", there was hope. Cameron's election would be protested. Cameron had spent "money in unlimited quantities", his agents "had scattered money and whiskey" throughout the riding. "Proof of corruption was overwhelming." Not only had money and whiskey poured forth but a "gang of roughs from London" had been hired by Cameron to intimidate the voters. Such accusations as the above filled the pages of the Exeter Times, which also charged that Mr. Gibbons, the Returning Officer had campaigned against Greenway. So the Tories launched a protest against Cameron who proceeded with attempts to protect himself on all sides. He presented a bill to redivide Huron, in his favour of course, by moving various polls and townships from one Huron riding to the other. The Senate suppressed the bill and thereby suppressed "the dangerous principle of allowing any member of the Commons whose return has been petitioned against to make a riding to suit himself."

Cameron was also suspected of suggesting to some Bayfield Conservatives that they work on the possibility of getting the Conservatives of South Huron to withdraw the protest against his election. Cameron is supposed to have promised to increase the government grant to Bayfield Harbour from $30,000 to $60,000. The Goderich Signal and the Seaforth paper denied that Cameron did anything wrong but the Exeter Times said "Cameron sinks lower."

The protest continued despite efforts to have it withdrawn and Cameron was brought to trial before an election court; he was found guilty of unlawful expenditures of funds. He escaped personal disqualification, but he was, nevertheless, unseated and a new election was called for early 1875. The Times was naturally ecstatic. The editor of Exeter's weekly suggested that "the trial so convinced the people of Cameron's duplicity ... that they delight in elevating their noses when they hear him approach, scenting him from afar ... Many who voted for him have so felt the anguish of conscience at having assisted in his election that they express themselves as willing, and anxious to work against him" in the future. The Times also said that the price paid for a vote by Cameron's boys was either $8.00 or a jug of whiskey and referred to them as the "united bribers of South Huron" meeting in "solemn conclave before the bar." Incidentally it was during this protested election of 1874 that Exeter enjoyed its first visit from a Prime Minister. Alexander Mackenzie "the dour Scot" came to South Huron to help Cameron. The Times spoke of Mackenzie's speeches in Exeter as having "distorted the truth till there was no knowing it." Mackenzie stayed with the Gidley's on William Street.

After the election trial Cameron dropped out of sight for a time; he evidently went south for some sunshine and while he was gone interesting events followed. In February, 1875 the nomination meeting for the South Huron by-election was held in Varna. Varna at this time was a small corner community with two general stores, a shoemaker, a blacksmith, a wagon maker, a tavern, two churches, and an Orange Hall. Varna was a favourite spot for the political campaigners in the 1870's. Sir John Willison in his Reminiscences describes a political meeting at Varna in 1872. Willison, when he was only fourteen had walked from his house in Hillsgreen and came upon Greenway and Cameron in political debate.

> "a group of men sat upon the platform, and in front and around were a crowd of people with eyes fixed upon a man who was speaking I knew at once that it was not a camp-meeting for there was no suggestion of the fervour and solemnity which distinguished such events There was occasional laughter and cheering, but I thought that some of those who listened did not like the behaviour of their neighbours. Finally the speaker sat down to much clapping and cheering Another man arose, and there was even more cheering As he spoke it was remarkable that he agreed with nothing that the first speaker had said, while those who had been silent now became happy and demonstrative But the light was breaking and almost instinctively I knew what game they were playing"

So the game went on and at the 1875 nomination meeting the Conservatives again nominated Greenway The Grits did not put up a candidate, consequently, Greenway became South Huron's Member by acclamation The Times was sure as were other Conservatives that Thomas Greenway was a good Tory But the Toronto papers said that a deal had been made between Greenway and the Liberal government of Mackenzie Willison, in his Reminiscences, suggests that "in fact, there was an agreement before he was returned by acclamation that he would support the Administration" of Alexander Mackenzie Greenway, however, announced that he was going to Ottawa as an Independent The Mitchell paper said that he was "a traitor" The Toronto Mail referred to "the traitor Greenway" and called him the "chattel" of Mackenzie's government It appears quite definite that the people of Huron thought he was going to Ottawa as a Conservative intending to support Sir John A MacDonald and the Opposition If he had not so intended and had in fact made an arrangement with Mackenzie then he was certainly guilty of a politically dishonest and personally selfish manoeuvre He had accepted the nomination as a Conservative and said nothing to indicate that he was undergoing a change of political persuasion

Later on Greenway did make statements in which he expressed a "desire to come to the House divested of all purely party principles" It was too late to cover up by then and the Times along with most other solid Tories in Huron became extremely critical of Greenway and remained critical of him throughout his term of office as Huron South's Member of Parliament Many never forgave him for his duplicity

It may be interesting to depart from the stream of Huron politics at this point to provide a brief comment on Thomas Greenway since he did play a rather prominent role in Canadian history although his important political contributions did not materialize until he had left Huron He ultimately became Premier

of Manitoba and was in that office during the school crisis in Manitoba.

Greenway had been born in Cornwall on March 25, 1838, his father's name was Thomas and his mother was Elizabeth Heard. The family had probably come from Tiverton in Devonshire originally. In 1844 when young Thomas was six, the family emigrated to Canada, settling first near Bowmanville and moving to Huron in 1849. The senior Greenway died in 1850 and Mrs. Greenway and young Tom, finished the log cabin themselves. Tom was only twelve but he left school then, and took a job in London. He walked home to Centralia every Saturday night. In 1859, when he was twenty-one he went into the general merchandising business and opened his store in Centralia. He prospered in business and married Anne Hicks; she died of smallpox in 1875. At that time Greenway lived at Devon in the house later occupied by Mr. Wickwire, this house was torn down about 1961, it was located south of the garage presently located at Devon Corners. One of Greenway's sisters married Dr. J. A. Rollins who practiced in Exeter for some time.

Greenway was Reeve of Stephen for ten years, until 1875 the year he entered the Commons. It is reported that the little settlement of Greenway was so named at this time in honor of Thomas. It is obviously not part of our story to recount Greenway's Manitoba political career. It is sufficient to note that Greenway migrated to Manitoba in 1878 and pioneered in the Crystal City area, a number of Exeter area and other Huron people also migrated to this same area of Manitoba. He entered Manitoba politics in 1879 as a Liberal for the Mountain riding. He became Premier in 1888 and continued in that office until 1900. During this time the controversial separate school issue ensued. He served later on in the Dominion House as the member for Lisgar. In 1908 he was appointed to the Dominion Railway Commission. He died on October 31, 1908. Fred Landon reported that Greenway seldom, if ever, spoke in the Federal House. He had, then, a long political career. Some historians have suggested that he never rose to anything more than a kind of astute mediocrity. He is, nevertheless, one of the more prominent politicians to emerge from the immediate Exeter area.

All of this could be expanded upon, we should, however, return to our main story. Greenway took his seat in the House in 1875 and represented Huron South until 1878. An election was called in 1878 and the preliminary events in Huron prior to that election are rather puzzling. In 1877 the Times noted that since Greenway had "gone over to the enemy" he would certainly not be considered as the Tory candidate in the next election, he had revealed himself as a full fledged reformer, "a turncoat" and "unworthy of support". As a "chattel of the reform party" he was "lame and impotent".

The Conservatives came up with a Mr. Robert Porter and the Grits chose "the Benedict Arnold of South Huron", Thomas Greenway, as their standard bearer. Beneath the item noting Greenway's nomination the Times had a skull and crossbones captioned "Memento Mori". Shortly after these nominations some unusual political procedures transpired. Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq. Q.C. emerged from his south land vacation and somehow he secured the Liberal nomination which had been bestowed on Thomas Greenway. Shortly after Greenway had given up the nomination he went west to Manitoba. What actually happened can only be surmised. Perhaps the Grits felt that Porter would defeat Greenway because of Greenway's widespread unpopularity. Sudden political transformations (or defections depending on how one looks at them) are often very unpopular and local Liberals may have felt that the old Cameron magic was needed to defeat Porter. Perhaps some deal was made by Greenway for some favors in the West in order to make way for Cameron's return. It is beyond our scope to follow these lines of thought. In brief, Cameron replaced Greenway as the Liberal candidate. The Times said "that Cameron had swallowed Greenway's vomit" and was going to try to save South Huron for the Grits.

With Porter campaigning vigorously for the Tories and Cameron working in his usual effective manner, the 1878 election in Huron South was a hot affair. The Exeter Times, the most partisan Tory paper in South Huron was naturally strongly in favor of Robert Porter as was the village of Exeter, Exeter gave Porter 207 votes and Cameron 92. The Times wanted Sir John A. back to dispose of the "effete party" and to end "the days of foetid corruption, wanton extravagance, and glaring misrule". Exeter had several good meetings, Cameron and Porter spoke in the famed Francistown hostelry, the Walper Hotel, on September 4, 1878, the Times praised the "transcendent abilities" of Porter. Isaac Carling, R. Pickard, Wharton Hodgson, V. B. Elliott, prominent Exeter citizens are mentioned as being present to support Robert Porter.

Throughout the campaign the Times kept up a steady attack on the Cameron party. The paper referred to the "many men of the Reform Party of South Huron" who ran after Cameron as vultures, "they cannot withstand the smell of carrion, they have a hankering after the fleshpots of Egypt". In order to be fair to the Times, it should be pointed out that its pages contained not only invective but also intelligent comment on the issues of the day. The chief issues of the 1878 election were Free Trade as opposed to

MacDonald's National Policy, railways, Mackenzie's inept government and of course government over spending Exeter businessmen and the Times were believers in the protection of MacDonald's National Policy; they were opposed to Free Trade and "Reciprocity with our Yankee neighbours".

The Times reported the speeches of the two candidates although Mr Porter's speeches were reported much more fairly than Mr Cameron's Mr Cameron was "wearisome, stale, and platitudinous" whereas Mr. Porter was "masterly, logical and convincing" There were meetings held all over the riding and they were well attended and well reported in all of the riding's weekly papers, the reports were naturally slanted by the political persuasion of the editors Mr. Cameron was bitterly critical of the Exeter Times, he charged it with being a "dirty, miserable Tory sheet" and observed how "shameful" its lies were At Limerick (Mt Carmel) Cameron's speech contained "the usual abuse of the Exeter Times" It is difficult to blame Cameron for attacking the Times. After all if a paper said such things as "Cameron the egotistical individual who would give his right arm and wade through filth and rottenness and falsehood to the teeth to represent South Huron", there was bound to be retaliation

The campaign progressed with the candidates meeting each other in halls throughout the riding Drew's Hall in Exeter was the scene of a major meeting with Isaac Carling in the Chair, Dr Rollins chaired a meeting in Crediton with 1000 people present Elimville, Grand Bend, Clinton, in fact, most places in the riding had an opportunity to see the candidates The postal service was an important local issue, the postal service was described as being provided by a "milk wagon with a broken winded horse"

The 1878 campaign saw rancour, villification, and abuse heaped upon each other by the Grits and the Tories. After the vote the Times rejoiced "A fatal day for the Grits". Sir John and his Conservative Party carried the country but there was a dampening note, the local Conservative candidate Porter was defeated by the seemingly unbeatable Cameron The Times deplored Cameron's win and said that it had been accomplished "by means the most foul and contemptible, by acts which degrade the constituency, and cover the so-called Reform Party with an odor of infamy and deepest shame Acts of the blackest corruption were resorted to in every quarter of the riding by the unscrupulous hireling agents of one of the most notorious corruptionists in the Dominion Nothing that low mean trickery could devise was left undone to secure that man Cameron's return Such a humiliating event as the election of Cameron could only have been secured by bribery".

Consequent upon the widespread charges of corruption the

local Tories launched the usual protest against Cameron's election The charge as usual against Malcolm Colin Cameron, Esq Q C was "bribery of the most scandalous and widespread kind" The Tories pressed the charge but Cameron was not found guilty this time Cameron continued to be the dominant political figure in Huron for the next several elections, for example, he defeated Robert Porter in West Huron in 1882 again "by means most foul and contemptible" The Times also noted that "the blackest corruption was reported in every quarter of the riding" It should be remembered in all of this that all parties practiced forms of bribery and staged open displays of fairly rough methods of persuasion On voting day in Huron and elsewhere, both parties gave free drinks of whiskey and beer There was lots of fighting as both candidates had supporters at the polling places to rough up a few supporters of the opposition "Johnny-runabouts" hung around the polling places for the free drinks and without secret ballots everybody knew how everyone else voted and confusion, beatings and bribery were the orders of the day

Cameron was not, however, directly involved in Exeter's political history after 1882 since Exeter, along with Stephen Township was gerrymandered into the North Middlesex Riding by the Conservative government This was done prior to the 1882 election in an effort to bolster the Tory vote in North Middlesex The riding was held by Timothy Coughlin, an Irish Catholic Conservative who had been elected for the first time in 1878; he won the seat again in 1882 and 1887 The Times had supported Coughlin in 1878 when the Parkhill Gazette attacked poor Timothy most rudely The Gazette said that Tim was "a slovenly farmer" "If one wants to see barn doors on one hinge, cattle and pigs in the garden and orchard, fences dilapidated" and many other agricultural sins, the Gazette said Tim Coughlin's farm filled the bill The Exeter editor sprang to Coughlin's defence by suggesting that the Gazette editor was a preposterous liar, "there was not" said the Times "a better managed farm in the county"

The Parkhill Gazette was not overjoyed with the strengthening of North Middlesex for Tory election purposes and began in 1882 a campaign to suggest that the Orangemen among the Tories wanted to throw the Catholic Coughlin out The Times observed that it was more dirty Reform Party work, The wicked Grits were trying to split the Catholic vote against Coughlin It did not work, however, and the Times regarded Coughlin's win as a victory not only for good government but also a victory over the Grit's efforts at trying to prejudice the minds of the electors by introducing religion as a local issue Exeter gave Coughlin solid majorities in both 1882 and 1887

In 1891 Exeter again supported the Conservative candidate giving that party's candidate, Hutchins 255 votes out of a total of 363 Over all Hutchin's majority was only 2 (later increased to 6 on the recount) The Times had told the people to choose between the Conservative party which pledged loyalty to Britain, Protection and Prosperity and the "Yankee Grit" party alternatives of Free Trade, Annexation and Ruin

Shortly after the 1891 general election the "Old Man" died The Times columns were bordered in black and the Times expressed the sorrow that all of Canada felt when Sir John A MacDonald died In its columns the Times noted that Sir John's lesson to everyone was "faithful performance of duty to our country"

Exeter remained in North Middlesex until 1904 being represented by W H Hutchins who squeaked in again in 1896 with a majority of 11 Exeter was visited by the Prime Minister on June 18, 1896 Sir Charles Tupper arrived in town accompanied by Sir John Carling, Isaac's brother, and other dignitaries The party was greeted with "unbounded enthusiasm" The largest crowd in the history of the village was reported to be on the streets When Tupper appeared on the station platform, "cheers followed, hats went up in the air, handkerchiefs waved in all directions For some time Sir Charles was kept bowing in response to the plaudits of the populace" A procession to the Driving Park "was made up of a large number of carriages, two bands, thousands of people on foot, and some militia men under Captain Howard and Thomas Prior" "Locally prominent Conservatives such as Dr Rollins, L H Dickson, Lancelot Hardy, B S O'Neill, D Mills, Miller White, C H Sanders, were in the lead carriages The Council, Reeve Bawden, Deputy Reeve T B Carling, and Councillors Taylor, Snell and Treble were also in the carriages with Sir Charles, Sir John Carling, Dr Montague, and W H Hutchins Sir Charles delivered a speech to a large crowd in the Driving Park John Sherritt held the North Middlesex Riding for the Tories from 1900 to 1904

In 1904 Exeter was returned to the Huron South Riding, as were the townships of Usborne and Stephen A man with the metaphorical name of B B Gunn, a Seaforth merchant bore the Tory standard against the Liberal, T Fraser During this 1904 election Exeter had a brief visit from Sir Wilfred Laurier who gave a five minute speech at the railway station, Laurier was on his way to Lucknow to deliver a campaign speech Gunn won Huron South but Laurier's Liberals won the country

In 1908 M Y McLean of Seaforth, won two elections, a by-election and the general election Exeter gave the Tory candidates, Horton and Sherritt substantial majorities

In 1911 McLean was defeated by 114 votes The winner was J

J. Merner of Zurich who brought South Huron back into the Tory fold. The country also went Conservative as Laurier and his Liberals were defeated on the great issue of the day, Reciprocity. Exeter's two newspapers the Times and the Advocate engaged in a debate on Reciprocity. The Advocate was a vehement supporter of the Conservative position and opposed Reciprocity. The Times, which was an unquesting supporter of the Conservative party during its first thirty years of existence had become a somewhat moderate supporter of Liberalism and of Laurier and King. This change in the Times' politics was a result of the rise to prominence on the paper of young J. M. Southcott whose political views differed markedly from those of the Whites whose true blue Conservatism had been reflected in the pages of the Times.

During the 1911 election campaign Exeter had its first visit from William Lyon Mackenzie King. He and M. Y. McLean spoke in the James Street Church shed on August 23. King was Laurier's Minister of Labor but the Advocate reported that "he scarcely measures up to the reputation accorded him by the Government papers. He is fluent but not accurate, ready, but not convincing". The Advocate went on to suggest that King's "methods suggest the work of the unscrupulous promoter who tries to befuddle rather than enlighten, to perplex rather than instruct". He "put up a big bluff" said the Advocate, "but in doing so he reckoned without regard to the intelligence of his audience whose lack of enthusiasm must have been depressing". The Times was not critical of King and the Advocate took the Times to task for its "slavish adherence to the dictation of the government". The Advocate in one of the fairly rare exchanges between the two papers, said that the "Times had thrown off its hypocritical mask" and "come out in its true colors", in other words the Advocate charged the Times with now being a Liberal paper. As we mentioned above old John White had been an unchangeable Tory but J. M. Southcott was a Liberal and over the years he gave moderate support to the Liberals, although he supported Conservatives as well, depending on the existing conditions. The Advocate, however, remained staunchly Tory until its amalgamation with the Times in the 1920's.

J. J. Merner attacked Reciprocity at a large rally held in the Opera House. Merner suggested that the Horse trade would suffer with Reciprocity, and Exeter which was still a fairly important center for the horse trade was impressed with Merner's speech. The Farmers' Bank was also attacked at this meeting as being a fraud. Many in South Huron had apparently "been fleeced by the bunch of thieves" which operated the Bank. Many lost money when the bank experienced financial difficulty. It is also worth noting that the Exeter salt industry made a strong case against Reciprocity as

well. So after the 1911 campaign was over Jonathan Joseph Merner was the winner, he represented South Huron until 1921.

In 1917 Merner was elected as the Conservative - Unionist candidate, or as the Tories termed it the "win-the-war candidate". Thomas McMillan from Tuckersmith was the Laurier Liberal candidate. The war and conscription were the great issues and South Huron was rather sharply split. There were, for example, certain elements in Stephen and Hay that voted heavily against the Conservative-Unionist government of Borden. The close division is reflected in Merner's very small majority of only 47 votes. In a larger study of this election in South Huron it would be possible to examine rural Western Ontario's attitude toward Conscription, - rural Western Ontario was not pro-Conscription. Indeed, J. J. Merner who had voted for conscription in the House was told all over the riding that he would not have supported Conscription if he "had a boy". Exeter, with its very English background responded to the call of the government and gave Merner overwhelming support, 320 votes to 120. On the other hand, Hay Township gave McMillan an even greater majority. The Advocate probably spoke for Exeter:

> "If you are in favor of sending reinforcements to the front to help the brave boys who are there, you will vote for Merner, if you are not you will vote the other way. The issue is plain, simple, free and above board. How any red-blooded British subject can find any difficulty in making a choice is beyond comprehension."

Before leaving the 1917 election, it should be noted that in 1917 petitions were being circulated in Exeter calling for universal women's suffrage. Only women directly and closely related to servicemen could vote and evidently some women in Exeter were urging that this be extended to all females.

In the first election after the Great War, Exeter and South Huron voters were given their first three-man slate to choose from. The three candidates were J. J. Merner, Tom McMillan and William Black. Black, the Progressive, won the riding with a majority of only 44 over McMillan and 140 over Merner. Black went to Ottawa to join 64 other Progressives. Exeter remained loyal to the Tory Merner giving him a solid majority. Black owed his win to three townships - Usborne, Hay and Stephen.

The major story as far as Exeter was concerned in the 1925 election was the visit of Canada's Prime Minister, Mackenzie King who made his second visit to Exeter. He came in support of Thomas McMillan. Thousands of people were in the village on Labor Day, 1925 to see and hear King. The town was "gaily decorated" with flags and streamers strung across the streets. Mackenzie King arrived on the morning train, and a parade led by the Zurich Band and Frank Taylor on a white horse escorted the Prime Minister to the steps of the library where Reeve W D Sanders read an "address of welcome" Mr King responded with a speech "entirely void of politics" The Prime Minister was introduced to Mrs Gidley and Mrs Christie who had entertained Alexander Mackenzie fifty years before when that Liberal Prime Minister visited Exeter The Reeve's address of welcome to King was most dignified and included "the freedom of the village" The Prime Minister enjoyed lunch in the house of Major Heaman

In the afternoon five thousand people gathered in Victoria Park to hear King and other dignitaries speak Two little girls, Jeanette Taman and Jean Stanbury presented King with a bouquet of roses from the garden of William Ward Gladioli from the garden of J S Harvey "adorned the platform" If King's speech had been non-political in the morning it was certainly political enough in the afternoon, he vigorously attacked Meighen and the Conservatives He told the people to return the Liberals to power, for their own good J C Elliott of London, McMillan, Senator McCoig and others spoke The arrangements for the day had been made by some of Exeter's prominent Liberals — Dick Seldon, Major Heaman, J G Stanbury, J Jeckell, E J Christie The four automobiles used by King and his party were Chryslers loaned by C C Pilon The great rally may have helped McMillan win South Huron, but the people of Exeter, while enjoying the day and its festivities went to the polls and cast a solid majority for J J Merner

The 1926 election came when King lost the confidence of the House and Tom McMillan won again, defeating Andrew Hicks, the former UFO member in the Ontario House Exeter stood firm, however, and gave the Conservative Hicks a large majority

In 1930 R B Bennett came to Exeter, he was leader of the opposition but did go on to become Prime Minister The people of Exeter, then, had another opportunity to visit with the man who would become their next Premier He was in Exeter on July 23 in support of Nelson W Trewartha Exeter was again gaily decorated The Dashwood Band and the Clinton Kiltie Band led a procession of cars to Victoria Park where "several thousand persons were present to hear the speeches" Catherine Armstrong and Britain Sanders presented flowers to Miss Bennett and Mrs Trewartha Reeve B M Francis welcomed Mr Bennett who gave a major speech referring to all of the problems of the day His visit to Huron was not enough, however, to unseat the popular McMillan who defeated Trewartha 6176 to 5827

Tom McMillan unfortunately died two years later in the

summer of 1932, his death was the result of being "crushed against the side of a stall by a colt" on his farm in McKillop Township. He was a popular member. The ensuing by-election saw a strong campaign in South Huron since both the Liberals and the Conservatives considered the election an important indicator election. Both parties sent important political figures to Exeter to support the candidates. The Liberal candidate was William H. Golding and the Conservative was Louis Rader. Both men were nominated on September 26 in Hensall. The main Street of Hensall was jammed and the candidates spoke from a truck as the crowd stood in a drizzling rain to hear the issues discussed. Mr. Rader said he was a farmer, the riding needed a farmer in Ottawa, therefore he should be elected — Mr. Golding spoke on the Bennett government's failure to end the depression and criticized the Tories for making the recent Imperial Economic Conference an issue in the by-election. Golding had been mayor of Seaforth for nine years.

Mackenzie King made his third visit to Exeter and spoke at a rally in the rink. Once again Main Street was decorated, the Zurich Band provided music and between 2000 and 3000 people gave King a "great ovation as he entered the building". B. W. F. Beavers chaired the meeting. Both King and Golding strongly criticized the government. The Times was favourably inclined toward Golding suggesting that he appeared to be "well informed". Mr. King stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Albert Traquair on this occasion.

The Conservatives also had their eyes on the riding and the Opera House was filled to capacity to hear the Hon. R. J. Manion, Minister of Railways and Canals. Louis Rader also spoke telling of his twelve years in municipal work which included the wardenship of Huron County. The result of the heavy campaigning saw Golding elected by a 2000 vote majority. Exeter stuck to its Tory tradition and gave Rader a majority but Golding's majority was the largest ever recorded in the riding up to that time. This, of course, marked the beginning of a long political career for Golding which eventually took him to the Senate.

In 1935 Golding recorded an even larger majority over Frank Donnelly and R. J. MacMillan, the Stevens Reconstruction Party candidate. While Exeter voted Tory, Golding polled the largest percentage of votes a Liberal had ever polled in Exeter. Donnelly secured only a 59 vote majority in Exeter out of 707 votes cast. Exeter was in the Huron-Perth riding for this election. By 1940 Golding was considered almost unbeatable and James Morley, a young Exeter lawyer was almost a sacrificial candidate for the Conservatives. Tom Pryde placed Morley's name in nomination. Golding had no trouble in securing a large majority over the riding but Exeter gave Morley a large majority.

Tom Pryde made his first foray into the election battles in 1945. He appealed to the voters as Flt. Lt. Thomas Pryde, a veteran of two wars and a Conservative. He said, "the Liberal government is unworthy to represent the people of Canada" and appealed to the voters of Huron to help remove the government of King. John Bracken, the Tory leader, came to Exeter and spoke at a rally in the arena. Two hundred students from the high school were present to hear Bracken's speech. Also in this election the voters of Exeter had their first opportunity to vote for a C.C.F. candidate, Mr. G. A. Cann of Exeter stood as that party's representative. While Pryde's strong and worthy campaign reduced Mr. Goldings majority to 466, he was not able to unseat the popular Seaforth member. This was Golding's last election.

In 1949 Mr. Golding did not seek re-election; he had served for seventeen years in the House. He had been Deputy-Chairman of the whole House and as a result of his service to the country and his party he was rewarded with a seat in the Senate. He gave excellent service in the Senate, serving on various committees including the important divorce committee; he had one of the best attendance records in the Senate. When he died in December, 1961 he had served continuously in public life for forty-five years as municipal councillor, mayor, Member of Parliament and Senator. As the Times-Advocate expressed it, "he always gave his best".

The 1949 election was contested for the Liberals by another Seaforth native, A. Y. McLean; McLean's grandfather had been both a federal and provincial member. Elgin McKinley, whose son Robert was elected Huron member almost fifteen years later was the Conservative candidate. The C.C.F. contested the riding with Rev. John R. Peters standing for the socialist party. With Golding not in the running the Tories had some hope of "redeeming the riding". At the Conservative nomination meeting, it is interesting to note that C. S. MacNaughton was nominated; he remarked as he declined "that Ottawa was full of bureaucrats, who spent money with reckless abandon".

During the 1949 campaign Exeter enjoyed another visit from a Prime Minister. This time, of course, it was the Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent. Mr. St. Laurent reached Exeter in the afternoon and proceeded to the front of the library where a large crowd had gathered. The London Police Boys Band, the staff and students of the high school led by June Walters and the Girls' Bugle Band, the "public school scholars and staff" and many townspeople were assembled. Ben Tuckey was the Chairman; Mr. St. Laurent was welcomed by Reeve A. J. Sweitzer. "The address of the Prime Minister could not be called a political speech, there was no platform oratory, but it was more of a friendly, get acquainted address " Premier Frost of Ontario also visited Exeter in 1949 Barbara Tuckey and Marilyn Hicks presented flowers to Mrs St Laurent

The only suggestion of rancour in the Exeter area during this campaign appeared in the Times-Advocate as the editor and Mr W F Oestreicher exchanged verbal barrages in the columns of the paper Mr Oestreicher talked of the Times-Advocate's "gross misrepresentation" and "scare propaganda which was directed against the C C F " The editor referred to some of the C C F 's contentions as "sewage" The exchange, however, was mild when compared with the strong language of the 1870's and 1880's which appeared in the Times When the vote was in, the Liberals had won the riding again as McLean polled a majority of 512 over McKinley The C C F polled only 558 votes to McLean's 7000 It goes without saying that Exeter voted Conservative again

In 1953 Exeter became a part of the new riding of Huron, two incumbent members, Elston Cardiff and A Y McLean sought to be the Member for the new Huron constituency Cardiff, the Tory from the old Huron North riding defeated McLean by less than 1000 votes, Exeter voted 783 to 499 for Cardiff Thus for the first time in 36 years, Exeter and the south part of Huron were represented by a Conservative in Ottawa During the 1953 campaign, John Diefenbaker was in Exeter where he accompanied Cardiff to the races Lester Pearson also visited Exeter that year

In 1957 Cardiff again defeated McLean by 3715 votes, in 1958 Cardiff defeated Exeter lawyer W G Cochrane Cochrane maintained that "the dissolution of parliament was entirely uncalled for at this time" and he also attempted to relate the closing of the Exeter canning factory to the Diefenbaker government's policies which reduced exports It was really no contest, however, since Cardiff was swept to victory by his own brand of electoral magic and, of course, by the "Diefenbaker deluge" which swept the largest majority in Canada's history into power The vote in Huron was 14,108 to 7550 for Cardiff but "Bill Cochrane suffered no personal embarrassment in the results in Huron While he was beaten by a record majority, it was still far less in proportion to others ... When an unknown farmer could defeat veteran campaigner Jimmy Gardiner — the tide was beyond dyking" The Exeter Times-Advocate went on to suggest that the leadership cult which had started in Canada with St Laurent and had culminated in Diefenbaker's huge majority was unhealthy and dangerous

The Cardiff electoral magic continued to work in 1962 when he defeated three opponents, Ernest Fisher, Liberal, Carl Hemingway, N D P , and Earl Douglas, Social Credit All failed to dent Cardiff's hold on Huron During this election the Times-Advocate embarrassed itself when it reported that "few doubt, at this moment, that veteran L. E. Cardiff will be defeated". The T. A. later reported that it had intended to say "few doubt that he will be elected". In 1963 Cardiff defeated Liberal Gordon McGavin.

In 1965 and 1968 Robert E. McKinley defeated Liberal candidate Maitland Edgar to hold Huron for the Conservatives despite the country's swing back to the Liberals.

In federal politics then, Exeter has a one hundred percent record, in every election since Confederation, Exeter voted Conservative. The only really notable political figures associated with Exeter at the federal level were Thomas Greenway and Senator Golding. The other figures never did rise to a place of national prominence or fame. The brief review of federal politics in Exeter and area has shown how rough politics was in the period following Confederation to about 1900. Newspapers were almost libellous in their comments, and bribery, threats and rough tactics were common. As time went on the newspapers became more moderate and the number of bribery charges diminished in Huron. Some of the more personal elements in politics also disappeared. The large political rally that characterized the small town has all but gone. Personal visits of an extended nature to small towns by Prime Ministers are a thing of the past. The number of people who are hard line Tories or Grits has diminished to the point where the apolitical majority now controls the vote.

In the old days most local villagers and farmers knew the candidates and had talked with them. Now many people, even in a rural riding do not know the candidates nor do they know the Member. In our age of electronic politics the political meeting is less efficient. Much of the color has gone from federal politics and people seem to be less involved than they were in the past. While Exeter still votes Tory the chances grow with each election that it may some day vote Grit as people become less and less partisan. If Exeter ever should vote any way but Tory, though, a small earthquake may occur in the old grave yard north of town as the old-time Tories roll over in their graves.

In provincial politics Exeter did vote Progressive twice but the rest of the time it remained Conservative. Exeter has been represented in the provincial House by only 12 Members since Confederation. These twelve were: R. Gibbons, Isaac Carling, Archibald Bishop, M. Y. McLean, Henry Eilber, Andrew Hicks, Nelson Trewartha, W. G. Medd, J. Ballantyne, Dr. Hobbs Taylor, Tom Pryde and C. S. MacNaughton. Six of these were Conservatives, four were Liberals, two were third party representatives, viz. Medd a Progressive and Hicks a UFO member.

The first man elected to represent Huron South in the

Legislative Assembly of Ontario was Liberal Robert Gibbons, he won by 10 votes but his term was very short lived, however, since his Conservative opponent Isaac Carling petitioned for an inquiry into the election. The hearings regarding the election are recorded in the Journals of the Ontario Legislative Assembly and they reflect the loose political morality of the day. There were charges and counter charges of bribery and corruption and of irregular voting. The Hay Township voters' lists included some illegal votes for Gibbons.

The hearing was held before five appointees of the Attorney-General's office and three of the five being Conservatives decided that Carling had a majority of the legally acceptable votes and was, therefore, entitled to be declared the duly elected Member for Huron South.

Carling and Gibbons fought the 1871 provincial election with Gibbons winning by 207 votes. Gibbons was appointed Sheriff in 1873 and the ensuing by-election resulted in the Liberal Archibald Bishop defeating Conservative George Case. Bishop was to hold the seat for the next 22 years. Bishop was from Usborne Township and had served on the Township Council since 1862. He held the Wardenship of the county in 1873 and 1874. Bishop was born in Edinborough, Scotland on September 6, 1829 and had come to Canada in 1849. He had settled in Usborne in 1854 and married Janet Doig in 1862. Bishop died in April 1901 after being stricken with paralysis while alone in his buggy.

For 22 years Archie Bishop was unbeatable. George Case tried again in 1875 and lost by 78 votes. The Bishop victory was due, according to the Times, to two factors. One of these factors was the Grit gerrymander of Goderich Township which saw 3 polls, No. 3, 4, and 6 only in South Huron. The other factor was "the indolence of the Tory voters in Stephen Township". The Conservatives failed to come out for Case feeling that the gerrymander "had licked them anyway".

G. E. Jackson took Bishop on in 1879, losing by 160 votes. The Times felt sure that Bishop would lose, the editor remarked that "Mr. Bishop, our talented representative will be like Grandfather's clock, stopped short, never to go again". In reporting one of Bishop's speeches the Times observed the following:

> "Mr. A. Bishop, South Huron's representative, in his wandering remarks said that he had only two years of schooling . . . If Mr. Bishop made these remarks for the information of the electors they were quite uncalled for as the fact that his education is limited is patent to everyone . . ."

The Times did not like Mr. Bishop's attitude toward education. The Times remarked that Bishop must have a poor opinion of the mental calibre of farmers in that Bishop opined that "a little readin', writin', and 'rithmetic is all a farmer's son requires." The Times noted that it was a matter of surprise that even Mr. Bishop would hold such anti-diluvian views on education.

Jackson was defeated again by Bishop in 1883. Exeter, as usual, followed the Times' views and voted Tory. The Times suggested that Mr. Bishop should "sink out of sight for his part in the sins of the Mowat government". In 1886 and 1890 Bishop easily defeated Tories Swenerton and Holmes.

In 1894, after 22 years, Bishop passed South Huron to M. Y. McLean who carried on the Liberal tradition. McLean secured majorities in only two municipalities, Seaforth and Tuckersmith, but these were so large that they were sufficient, by 16, to overcome the Tory majorities elsewhere in the riding. When Bishop stepped down he commented in the Times on a party he had attended toward the end of his term. It seemed that Country Boy Bishop did not socialize much and he immortalized one of his few social gatherings in 1894 in a long poem which appeared in the Advocate in March, 1894. The poem was entitled "Borrowed Swallertail" and a small sample of it is given below.

> "One night the hospitable government
> of Simco-avenoo
> Got up a fete to celebrate
> South Huron's son's daboo
> The lavishness of wealth displayed
> Would turn a Croesus pale
> And best of all was Bishop
> In his borrowed swallertail."

In 1898 the long Liberal reign in South Huron was ended by Henry Eilber. This victory marked the beginning of another long term in South Huron. Eilber served the riding for 21 years. His father Jacob had come from Pennsylvania to Crediton and had established a general merchandise business and eventually became postmaster in Crediton. Eilber had been in municipal politics in Stephen as councillor, reeve, deputy reeve, and clerk. He died in January, 1943 at the age of 86 having served in municipal affairs, in the provincial legislature and as secretary treasurer of the Hay Township Mutual Fire Insurance company for 53 years.

But to return to the 1898 election. It was a joyous occasion for the Times and for Exeter. The headline in the Times, beneath the ensign of Ontario, fairly shouted:

> "Eilber a Bismarck
> South Huron Redeemed
> After 30 years!"

As Leacock says in Sunshine Sketches, "Men who had voted, with pain and sorrow in their hearts for the Liberal Party for twenty years, came out that evening and owned up straight that they were Conservatives". Eilber had not won easily. The Grits had attacked his character and his business ethics, circulars among the Catholics accused him of being a P.P.A. Even after he had won, McLean, the defeated Liberal candidate suggested that Eilber's victory was "a dishonourable and purchased victory". The Tory leader, James Pliny Whitney, had been in Exeter during the campaign and had addressed a mass meeting in the skating rink. 3000 people were present to hear the Exeter Brass Band play "patriotic airs" and to lead the procession from the hotel to the rink. "Hail to our Beloved Chief" was printed on a large banner over the platform from where Dr. Rollins chaired the meeting. Whitney attacked Sir Oliver Mowat's government with such charges as "that good man, Sir Oliver Mowat had ridden both the saloon and temperance horses, while making promises to the temperance people he had his hand in the pockets of the license holders — and it seldom came out empty".

Eilber spoke as "a humble German boy who graduated from a twenty foot log schoolhouse (applause)". But he said "he was going into the fight to win". Eilber did, indeed, win in 1902, 1905, 1908, 1911 and 1914. He was criticized by the Times in 1908 for having the riding gerrymandered. The Times said he went "crying to Whitney" to get Grit Seaforth out of South Huron and to add the other Tory polls of Goderich Township to the riding.

Eilber's opponent in 1911 and 1914 was Edmund Zellar. In 1914 a major Ontario issue was Temperance, Edmund Zellar's pledge to the people of South Huron was to "abolish the bar". He said a vote for Eilber was a vote for the bar, and a vote for Zellar was a vote to "wipe out the curse". Zellar said 6000 men fill drunkards' graves in Canada each year. "These 6000 were once little boys with the fond hopes of their good mothers, yet the bar got them". Zellar even quoted Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany who claimed that "nerves are undermined and endangered by the use of alcohol".

In June 1914, N. W. Rowell, the Liberal and Temperance leader spoke at the rink in Exeter. A huge crowd gathered to hear Rowell pledge to "wipe out the bar in the Ontario Club, the Albany Club and every other club". He said the Conservatives had chosen to "stand by the bar" and that "the liquor forces were lined up behind them". But the "churches were on the Liberals' side". "Remember your young people" said Rowell, "don't let a good Huron boy become ensnared in a wicked, evil barroom". Promi-

nent Exeter Liberals such as Heaman and Stanbury arranged the meeting and "Master Douglas Stanbury, the boy soprano sang".

The Conservatives and Eilber, despite the strong attack by the Liberals and Zellar, and despite the "lying, slandering sneaks" that went up and down the riding "slandering" Mr Eilber, still won the 1914 election Soon after this election, the Premier, Mr Whitney died

In 1919, the long Eilber reign ended in South Huron This was the year that the UFO swept into power and Eilber did not contest the seat Some said that he saw the "writing on the wall" and stepped down before the election Fred Ellerington made his only foray into politics and the Conservative standard bearer, he went down to defeat as did Liberal John T Morgan The winner was the UFO candidate, Andrew Hicks of Centralia A number of prominent Exeter and area men supported the UFO cause at this time W D Sanders, a UFO director, pointed out that "the big interests are manipulating things to keep the common people hewers of wood and drawers of water" He said, "there were too many officials, too many laws, and too many men getting something for nothing" R E Pickard felt that "we have too many millionaires running the country" and went on to suggest that if farmers did not secure more representation, "the other fellow will see that the farmer will carry the big end of the load" S J Pym, Enos Herdman, R G Seldon, John Essery, Joshua Johns and many other prominent men of the area supported the UFO movement Andrew Hicks suggested that "the manufacturers are to Canada what the Kaiser was to Germany and only the farmers could stop them" from totally running the government and the country He said "farmers have to stick together"

Some of the men who supported the UFO movement did not go-so far as to support the party at the polls Traditionally Liberal men like Pickard, Seldon, Essery and others probably voted Liberal while sympathizing with the farmers Exeter remained Tory and gave Ellerington a very large majority Usborne, Stephen, and Hay gave substantial majorities to Hicks who won the riding by about 700 votes over Ellerington Hicks became the UFO whip during his time in the House

For some reason Hicks was dropped in 1923 by the UFO and the party chose W G Medd an Exeter creamery operator "Considerable surprise was felt throughout the riding when it was known that Mr Hicks had been dropped by the party " Hicks had evidently done a good job Nelson Trewartha was the Tory candidate and he and George Henry held a well-attended rally in the Opera House D F MacGregor, the Liberal standard bearer criticized the UFO administration and the Conservative party "in the usual manner", remarked the Times with perhaps a trace of tedium The Tories swept South Huron and the province

W G Medd stood as the Progressive candidate in 1926 and 1929 In these two elections no Liberal contested the riding The Tories were A Neeb and G Elliott Medd won both elections and Exeter, for the only time in its history, voted against the Conservative candidates In the 1929 election the returning officer Fred Ford of Clinton declared Elliott elected by a small majority, a celebration occurred in both Clinton and Seaforth The Ontario dailies declared Elliott's election the next day The Times-Advocate, however, reported as follows

> "As we go to press this morning the results of the election in Huron are in doubt After working until a late hour and with many long distance telephone calls we place Mr Medd's majority at ten Mr Ford the returning officer at Clinton gives Mr Elliott a small majority"

The Times-Advocate proved to be right and the official figures declared Medd elected by 26 This must be one of the rare occasions when a small town weekly scooped the big dailies W C Pearce was Medd's agent Mr Medd had come to the Exeter area in 1904 when he took over the Winchelsea creamery In 1919 he bought the Exeter creamery from J H Scott and moved to Exeter He lived in the large red house on Andrew Street near Hill Street Medd served only two terms and in 1934 the riding, now known as Huron was contested by James Ballantyne (Independent-Liberal-Progressive) — he was covering all sides it seems, William Cooper (Independent) and George H Elliott (Liberal-Conservative).

At the nomination meeting in Hensall things were going along fairly smoothly "with very little heckling" until Elliott "cast a reflection on the integrity of one of the speakers by saying that he is what I call a blood sucker" Pandemonium reigned with cries of "shame", "sit down", "that's dirty" The meeting did come to order again with Ballantyne receiving a "great ovation" Cooper's speech "brought forth many a hearty laugh and his address was not taken any too seriously" The election was a hotly contested one Mitchell Hepburn came to the riding to lead a strong Liberal campaign, which paid off and the Liberals after 29 years in opposition were returned to power, Ballantyne also won in Huron

Ballantyne won again in 1937 over Dr Hobbs Taylor, the Dashwood physician and Conservative Dr A Moir contested the riding as the Temperance candidate The Canada Temperance Act was an issue in this election in Huron The Hepburn Government had "refused to accept the findings of the Supreme Court and the Privy Council in regard to the Canada Temperance Act as it applied to Huron County". Earl Rowe had promised to clean up the beverage rooms in Huron County. Dr. Taylor promised to see what he could do to help close up the beverage rooms, since "he was conscientious in the belief that they are a menace to the youth of the country". The Conservatives promised to recognize Canada Temperance Act counties as "dry territory". The forces for Temperance in Huron decided to support Dr. Taylor since "Hepburn has overruled the will of the people in this county and his action in placing beer parlours here was an outrage". Some Temperance men, however, supported the move to field a Temperance candidate, this man, Dr. Moir polled 942 votes to Taylor's 5862 but Ballantyne, despite the furor over Hepburn's liquor policy polled 7042 votes to hold Huron for the Grits. Dr. Moir was not subdued, he wrote the Times-Advocate as follows:

> "The liquor magnates think they have again dealt us another knockout blow, which will keep us sleeping ... but in this they reckon wrongly for the Temperance people of Huron are stirred as never before to strike at the subtle python head of the liquor traffic wherever that head appears."

In 1943 another Exeter man entered the provincial field. Benson Tuckey replaced Ballantyne as the Liberal candidate. Tuckey and other local Liberals were not happy with Ballantyne despite his successful retention of the constituency for nearly 10 years. Tuckey was opposed by Taylor and Oestreicher. Taylor won the election by 461 votes over Tuckey who stood on a platform of "strong provincial rights and strong local government". Taylor increased his majority to 2000 in 1945 over Ballantyne and C.C.F.er, Huckins. Taylor was ill and could not campaign but his supporters campaigned for him and pointed to the new highways, increased school grants, and reduced hydro rates. The Conservatives also played upon Huron's fears of socialism. Taylor called Caldwell, the C.C.F. leader "the Karensky of the Canadian Revolution" and suggested that the C.C.F. would destroy freedom. It was during this time that E. D. Bell assumed the Presidency of the Huron riding.

Dr. Taylor died on Dec. 17, 1947 at the age of 51. He had been a "hard working Member, interested in and working for the welfare of the riding". Two Exeter men contested the resulting by-election in February, 1948. Tom Pryde and Ben Tuckey engaged in a "clean, square, and above board" contest. Pryde also remarked that "when its all over Mr. Tuckey will still be doing his trucking". The Temperance people of Huron probably supported Pryde although the Temperance Federation said we "have no reason to look with favor on either party. Our cause has suffered greatly at the hands of both." Tom Pryde won the election but had to go to the people

again in June 1948 and fought a close battle with Frank Fingland who appeared at one point to have won. Pryde had conceded but when the final count was in he had a 109 majority over Fingland.

Thomas Pryde retained the seat again in 1951 and 1955 against John Armstrong and James Scott. Tom Pryde died in 1958 having served the Huron riding for 10 years. In May of that year C. S. MacNaughton began his political career which took him to the highest political office any Huron Member of the Ontario Legislature ever achieved. He eventually became Provincial Treasurer and was frequently acknowledged as the senior statesman in the government of John Robarts and later of William Davis. He won the 1958 by-election by 1164 votes over Dr. Addison of Clinton; in 1959 and 1963 he defeated Harry Strang and in 1967 he polled the largest majority ever recorded in Huron polling 8343 votes. Brigadier Smith of Bayfield had 3723 votes and John Boyne had 1340 votes. One hundred years previous in 1867 the narrowest margin was recorded with 10 being Gibbon's majority over Carling. Mr. MacNaughton is the only provincial member from the riding to attain cabinet rank.

This brief survey of Exeter's place in the political life of the county has shown how much entertainment value politics had in the early years when great meetings and rallies brought, often, thousands of people to town for a day of celebration. Small town politics now do not provide this element. Prime Ministers do not come to small towns much any more to make speeches. The day of the small town political rally is over. The day of the vehemently political small town weekly is over; no longer do the county papers refer to the "enemy" when speaking of the opposing party. A great deal of color has been lost, and too often blandness is the characteristic of our politics. The gross acts of political bribery and corruption are gone, at least from our part of the country. Violent political arguments no longer are heard in the barber shops and bars and meeting halls of the villages and towns. Political loyalties are now blurred as the number of committed Tories and Grits diminish. As much of the partisanship and fun disappear from politics we run the risk of taking the government and our politicians too seriously, something which despite the surface vehemence of our politics in the past, we have not done in Canada.

People would not stand in the rain for two hours to hear the candidates speak today. The candidates don't "harangue the troops" in the same way. Politics are now too solemn. Our greatest political figure was known to drink rather heavily and we have laughed at our politicians and they have laughed at themselves. We have, nevertheless, been law abiding but now the level of interest in politics at all levels has fallen, at the same time our degree of seriousness has increased, It seems paradoxical. So the great election fights of small town "Upper Canada" seem to be a thing of the past and it is unlikely that they will return.

Hopefully, we can recapture the spirit of our former political activity and direct it into creative political channels. Perhaps the youth will shape a new politics and hopefully the words of Sir John A. MacDonald still apply:

> "I believe that the spirit of our fathers, who fought and won battle after battle, still exists in their sons, and if I thought otherwise, I would sooner the grass was growing over my grave rather than I should see the degradation of the country which I loved so much and served so long."

Perhaps before closing this section it is worth noting again that Exeter and the immediately adjacent area can claim as native sons several important political figures. Three provincial premiers come to mind. William Melville Martin who was premier of Saskatchewan, came from Exeter, J. G. Gardiner whose political offices included the premiership of Saskatchewan as well as federal cabinet membership, and Thomas Greenway who became premier of Manitoba came from the area. Other names include Frank W. K. Tom who became an Ohio senator, W. H. Harvey who was a member of the Saskatchewan legislature, J. A. Gregory also a Saskatchewan M.P., Donald Fleming was born in Exeter, Fleming was a member of the Diefenbaker cabinet. Of recent date C. S. MacNaughton is the most well-known.

Epilogue

But what of Exeter today?

A town whose population sign reads 3200 but whose population swells to 5000 once a year on Rodeo Day, Exeter is still primarily influenced by the agricultural land around it. Exeter's natives swear its the best little town in Ontario, and the more newly-arrived inhabitants seem surprised when a stranger smiles at them on the street or says a friendly hello in a store. We don't have a movie theatre, but in the winter you can bowl, snowmobile, skate, toboggan, play hockey or learn a craft. In the summer the pool is full of kids and the parks ring with the sound of children's laughter.

Exeter is a town where the retired and not-quite-retired farmers congregate in the morning around the post office and discuss the weather or the price of beans — especially on Thursdays when the local newspaper is published.

Its a town where people come to get away from the big city rush and find its a great place to raise a family. Then the kids grow up and head back to the city for some "action".

And the kids, what of them? One hundred years have not made a big difference in the character of the kids of Exeter. Rural enough to still remain unsophisticated, urban enough to think they're wordly-wise, Exeter's kids turn out pretty well — and after all, they are what the next hundred years are all about.

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Wooden, Joseph L.
Exeter, situate on the London & Goderich Road in the township of Stephen and Usborne, 30 miles from London and in the County of Huron, C.W.

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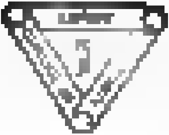

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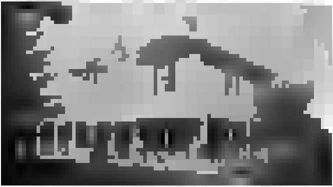

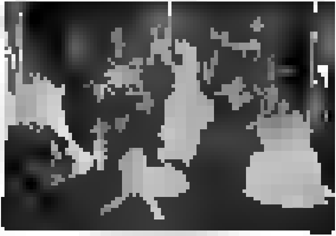

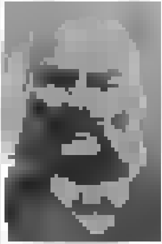

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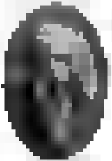

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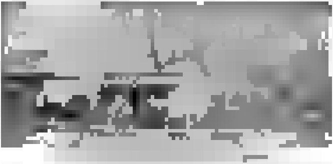

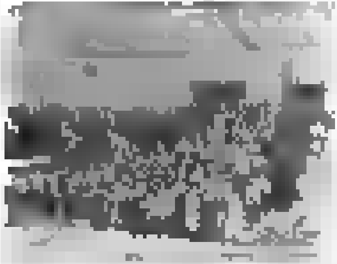

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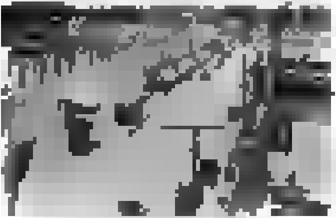

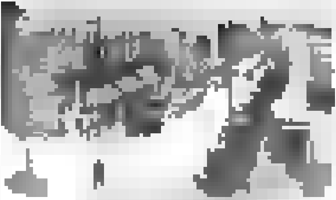

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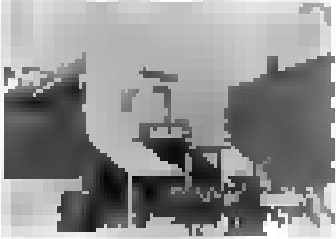

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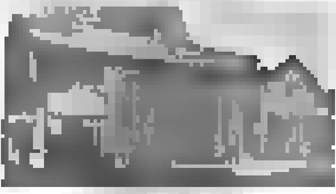

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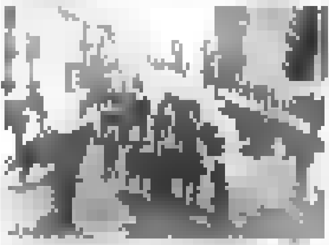

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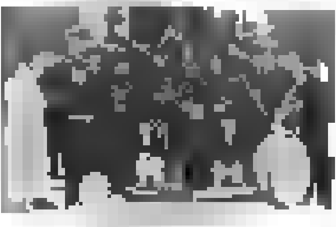

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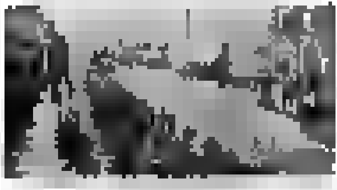

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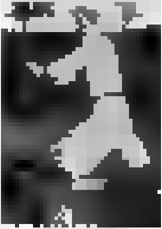

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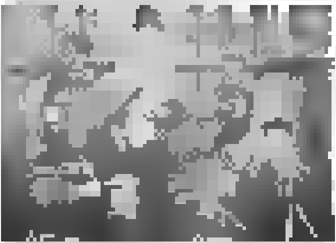

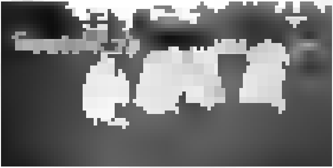

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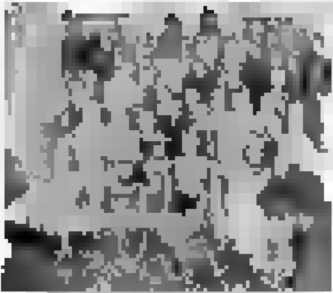

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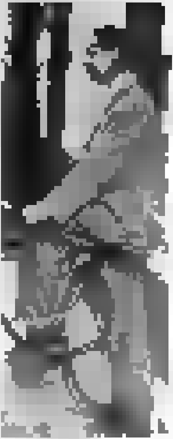

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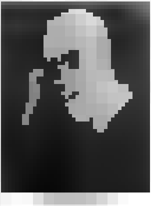

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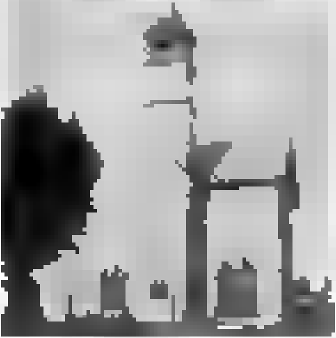

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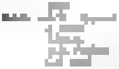

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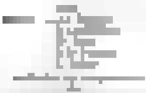

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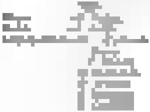

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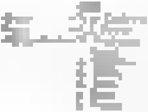

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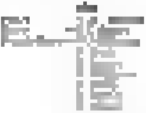

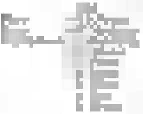

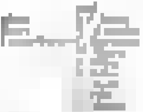

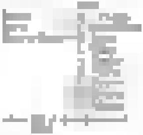

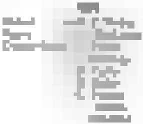

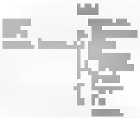

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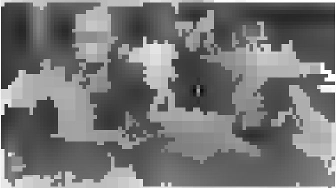

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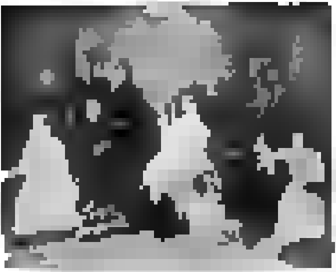

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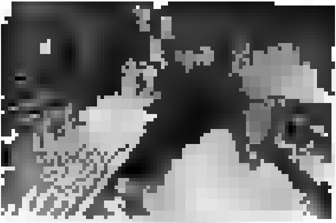

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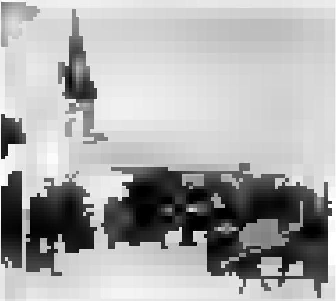

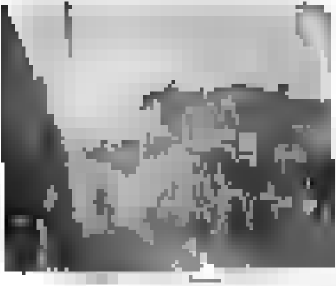

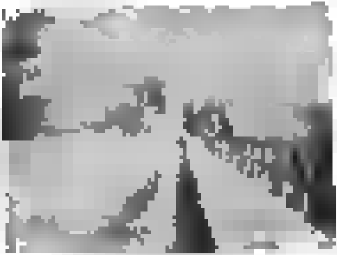

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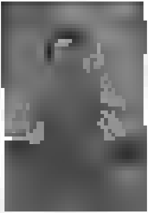

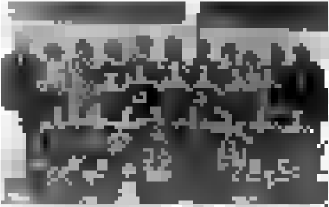

chapter 10

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